STORY

OF

HE INDIAN MUTINY,

AND OF

E DISTURBANCES WHICH ACCOMPANIED IT AMONG THE CIVIL POPULATION.

BY

T. R. E. HOLMES.

THIRD EDITION REVISED.

(With Two Maps and Six Plans.)

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

Those who may open this book will not, I think, complain that it is wanting in detail or in that element of personal adventure which could not properly be excluded from a History of the Indian Mutiny. But it does not profess to give a minute account of what took place at every station and in every district in India during the struggle A narrative minute enough, in most of its chapters, to satisfy the most curious reader has already been given to the world by Sir John Kaye and Colonel Malleson; and there is nothing to justify anyone in undertaking to write another book on the subject on the same scale as that which they adopted. The history of the Mutiny, like every other history, must indeed be told in detail, if it is to hold the interest of readers: but, while the [illegible] tor of recent events is expected to give a full account of all that are interesting in themselves, the writer who appears later in the field ought to reserve his detailed narrative for events of historical importance. There is, I am sure, room for a book

which, while giving a detailed narrative of the chief campaigns, of the stirring events that took place at the various centres of revolt, and of every episode the story of which can permanently interest the general reader, and a more summary account of incidents of minor importance, should aim at completing the solution of the real historical problems connected with the Mutiny. I am only too conscious how far my performance of this task falls below the standard which I have set myself. Still, I hope that my attempt may be of use. The whole truth about any period of history is never known until many workers have sought for it; and it is possible that a writer who has derived almost all his information from original sources may succeed in throwing light upon neglected aspects of his subject, and in gaining the attention of some who have hitherto known nothing of one of the most interesting chapters of their national history. Though this book is so much shorter than those which have preceded it, my object has not been to write a short history or a popular history, in the ordinary sense of the term, but simply to write the best history that I could, to reco[illegible] everything that was worthy to be remembered; [illegible] enable readers to understand what sort of men th[illegible] chief actors in the struggle were, and to realise

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

In preparing this edition, I have corrected a slight error of detail (p. 57), and one or two unimportant misprints. Otherwise the book remains unchanged.

20 Kensington Crescent,
London, W.
March 7, 1888.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

SINCE the publication of the first edition of this book, I have received from various correspondents, to whom I am heartily grateful, notes containing fresh information, or pointing out inaccuracies, real or supposed, in the narrative. These corrections were few, and, with hardly an exception, referred to the minutest points of detail. Some of them, after careful consideration and comparison with my previous authorities, I have rejected Others I have accepted; and in a few sentences the text will be found altered accordingly. I have, moreover, altered part of the paragraph (pp. 375–6) following the account of the slaughter of the Princes of Delhi, and inserted a few additional lines in the paragraph (p 387) describing the results of the recapture of Delhi.

January 22, 1885

what they and their comrades and opponents did and suffered; and to ascertain what were the causes of the Mutiny, and how the civil population of India bore themselves during its progress.

As I have found myself unable to agree, on certain points, with Sir John Kaye and Colonel Malleson, it is the more incumbent on me to say that, if their books had never appeared, the difficulty which I have felt in finding my way through the tangled maze of my materials would have been greatly increased. In some cases, I am indebted solely to those books for information which I might have found it hard to get elsewhere. To students of military history Colonel Malleson's work will always be indispensable.

In the last appendix I have given a short critical account of the authorities which I have used.

In conclusion, I desire to express my gratitude to those who have helped me by answering queries, or by allowing me to read private letters or manuscripts.

VINE COTTAGE,
LEE PARK, LEE.
October 8, 1883

GLOSSARY.

[Words explained in the text are not given here Nor are those whic occur once only in the text, as they are explained in foot notes Th words given below have also been explained in foot-notes, but are brougl together for the convenience of readers]

BHEESTY	Water carrier
BUNYAH	Grain dealer or money-lender
DACOITY	Gang-robbery
JEMADAR	Native lieutenant
LINES	Long rows of huts in which sepoys lived
NULLAH	A small stream or ditch
RAJ	Government
RYOT	Peasant cultivator
SUBAHDAR	Native captain
TEHSEELDAR	Native revenue collector.
TULWAR	Native sword
VAKEEL	Agent, or man of business.

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CHAPTER I.*

GENERAL SKETCH OF ANGLO-INDIAN HISTORY TO THE END OF LORD DALHOUSIE'S ADMINISTRATION.

The Mogul Empire. 1525.

THREE centuries ago, when the East India Company was still unformed, a great part of India submitted to the sway of a Mahometan prince. This ruler, whose name was Akbar, was the most renowned of the descendants of Baber, who, early in the sixteenth century, had swept down from the north-west upon Hindostan, and founded the Mogul Empire. Unlike Mahometan con-

* As I only profess to give in this chapter such an introductory sketch as may help readers to understand the phenomena of the Indian Mutiny, I have not thought it necessary to give specific references to authorities except in a few cases, where it seemed possible that my statements might be questioned, and for the much-controverted administration of Dalhousie. The chapter, with the exception of the part which deals with Dalhousie's administration, is the result of a study, extending over several years, of the ordinary and some of the less known works on Anglo-Indian history, and nearly completed before I had conceived the idea of writing this book. Those who wish to know more about India and Indian history than this sketch can tell them, will do well to build up the skeleton of their knowledge by studying Hunter's *India, its History, People, and Products*, and afterwards to clothe the skeleton with flesh and blood by reading a few good biographies. Many articles in the *Calcutta Review*, the correspondence of Hastings (in Gleig's *Memoirs*), the *Cornwallis Correspondence*, Wellesley's *Despatches*, and Malcolm's *Political History*, might also be read with profit by those who have time to spare. What prevents so many people from reading Anglo-Indian history with interest is that they start in complete ignorance of the way in which the Government was carried on, and of the characteristics of Indian life. Such books as I have recommended would help to supply the requisite knowledge.

querors in the rest of the world, the Moguls respected the religion of their subjects, and established a government which, with all its faults, was contentedly accepted by the mass of the governed, and won for the person of the emperor, or perhaps more truly for the imperial idea, a superstitious veneration which had not perished when the Indian Mutiny broke out. The emperors governed their dominions through the agency of viceroys, whose provinces were larger than many European kingdoms, and who, in their turn, gave the law to inferior rulers. Gradually the boundaries of the empire were extended until, under Aurungzebe, it attained its farthest limits. Yet it was from his accession that its decline dated, for, by a religious bigotry which he had not learned from his somewhat lax predecessors, he did his best to alienate his Hindoo subjects. The Rajpoots rebelled against the rule to which they had never wholly submitted, even when it had humoured their religious prejudices. The Mahrattas, a race of Hindoo freebooters, poured down under their great leader, Sivajee, from their fastnesses in the western mountains, and, by the swift and sudden inroads of guerilla warriors, sapped the strength of the central power. The viceroys saw the growing weakness of the successors of Aurungzebe, and hastened to secure their independence. The degenerate inhabitants of Delhi bowed beneath the tyranny of the Persian invader, Nadir Shah. The decline and fall of an earlier and greater empire was re-enacted in India, and there too, after the long agony of the night, a brighter day was to dawn upon the afflicted nations. If the story of an empire's decay is full of pathos, even when it has deserved its fate, the fall of the Mogul, who had ruled more unselfishly than any other Eastern power, may well claim our sympathy. Yet he too had sinned, and his sins had found him out. Mogul civilisation had been only a splendid mockery, and, while the viceroys were emancipating themselves from control, their own want of union was paving the way for the rise of a people who were to conquer the often-conquered nations of India once more, but to conquer them for their own good.

1658-1707

1739

For a century and a half the agents of the East India Company, which had arisen under Elizabeth, had been mere traders, and, now that they were about to become conquerors, they had no thoughts of the destiny which

1599

lay before them All unconsciously they began to work out the magnificent idea of founding a European empire in Asia

Dupleix attempts to found a European empire in India

It was the genius of a Frenchman that had originated this idea Dupleix, the Governor of the French settlement of Pondicherry, saw that the disturbed condition of the native powers held out a chance of aggrandisement to a European statesman who would have the tact to interfere as an ally, and not as a principal, while he knew the strength of the instrument which the superior courage and discipline of European troops placed in his hands In 1748 Nizam-ul-Mulk,* Viceroy of the Deccan, one of the under kings who had profited most by the decay of the imperial power, died, and rival claimants appeared for the vacant throne About the same time a competitor stood forward to dispute the title of the Nabob of the Carnatic, who had looked up to the late Nizam as his over-lord Dupleix saw his opportunity While he seemed to be supporting the cause of one pair of pretenders, about whose rights he did not trouble himself, he easily defeated the feeble efforts which the English made in self-defence to uphold their rivals, and made himself master of the Deccan

1748-1751

Some years before, when the hostilities between France and England in the war of the Austrian succession had spread to their settlements in India, Labourdonnais, an unrecognised hero, had captured the English settlement of Madras, and impressed the natives of India with a firm belief in the military superiority of the French over ourselves

1746

The successes of Dupleix were strengthening this opinion, when a young Englishman accomplished a feat of arms which established his own fame as a commander, and the character of his countrymen as warriors Trichinopoly, the only fortress in the Carnatic that remained in the possession of the Nabob whom the English supported, was closely invested by the enemy, when Robert Clive conceived the plan of diverting their attention by the seizure of Arcot, which he held for fifty days with a handful of men against all the forces that they could bring against him Thenceforth the power of the English in Southern

1751

Clive thwarts him

* His real name was Chin Kilich Khan Nizam-ul-Mulk was a title, meaning 'regulator of the state' Chin Kilich Khan's successors were always known as the Nizams

India increased, while that of the French diminished, though Bussy, the most capable of Dupleix's lieutenants, exercised a commanding influence in the Deccan, and though, ten years later, the unfortunate Lally strove to restore his country's fortunes in the Carnatic. A succession of victories added to Clive's fame; and Dupleix returned, with ruined fortune and shattered hopes, to France, where an ungrateful people withheld the honours which might have solaced him, and treated his services with contempt.

It was not in the south, however, that the decisive battle for the mastery of India was fought. In 1756 Clive, who had but lately returned to Madras from a visit to England, was summoned northwards by the news that Suraj-ud-dowlah, the effeminate Viceroy of Bengal, had captured the English settlement of Fort William, and suffered nearly all his captives to perish in the Black Hole of Calcutta. The instant recovery of Calcutta and the capture of the French settlement at Chandernagore, to which the Viceroy had looked for help, failed to teach him the wisdom of submitting to the English; but the hatred and contempt with which he was regarded by his subjects facilitated the development of a plot by which his General, Meer Jaffier, aided by Clive, was to seize his throne. The victory of Plassey, which gave the conspirators success, has been rightly seized upon by popular instinct as the date of the foundation of the British Empire in India; for it gave the throne of Bengal to a man who owed everything to the English, and whom their support could alone sustain in power. The designs of Dupleix had been realised,—but by Clive.

The Black Hole of Calcutta

1757

June 23, 1757. Plassey.

Clive, however, had more victories to win, before he could seek rest again at home. At Patna he shattered the hopes of the Mogul's eldest son, who had set out to conquer the upstart Viceroy; he humbled the pride of the Dutch, who, trusting to the friendship of the fickle Meer Jaffier, had sailed from Java, to share in the spoils of India, and to balance the overgrown power of the English; and he struck the French power in its most vital part by sending an army southwards under Colonel Forde, who won back some factories in the Northern Circars which Bussy had seized, and expelled the French from that part of India. Meanwhile Lally was maintaining in the south a struggle for the re-

Further successes of Clive

storation of the French power but it was a hysterical effort, and doomed to failure Eyre Coote's victory at Wandewash sounded the knell of the French power in India

1760

When the pressure of Clive's firm and just rule had been removed, the servants of the Company seized the opportunity of amassing wealth by illicit means They set up and pulled down viceroys, and extorted large presents from each new puppet They claimed for themselves unfair advantages in commerce, by which the Viceroy's subjects suffered But, corrupt and grasping as they were, they were not wholly inexcusable, for their salaries were miserably insufficient Their rapacity was emulated by the officers of the army, who were beginning to show a spirit of insubordination which could only be checked by the hand of the man who had led them to victory Such an unnatural state of things could not be suffered to continue At last Clive was sent out again to deal with the mass of evil which had accumulated, and, if he could not destroy it, he at least held it in check while he remained in the country But, besides waging war against corruption, he had to solve a difficult political problem He saw that the English power, having advanced so far, could not, in the nature of things, remain stationary Nevertheless, he desired to put a drag upon its onward course, to abstain, as far as he safely could, from all interference with native politics, and, while erecting a substantial fabric of government, and placing it upon a solid foundation, to give it a modest outward form, lest it should provoke the envy of his rivals His idea was that the Company should take the government of Bengal into their own hands, but should do so not as a sovereign power, but as the nominal deputy of the puppet Mogul Emperor He accordingly proceeded to Allahabad, and there, in an interview with the Emperor and the Vizier of Oude, fixed the destinies of India In the preceding year the Vizier, taking the unwilling Emperor with him, had invaded Behar, but had been signally defeated by Hector Munro at Buxar This battle had given to the English the rich province of Oude, the power of disposing of the Mogul, and the prestige of being the first power in India Clive now turned these advantages to account He restored Oude to the Vizier, exact-

Corruption of the British during Clive's absence in England

1765
Clive's return

His policy

1764

ing from him as an equivalent an indemnity of five hundred thousand pounds, and induced the Mogul to invest the Company, in return for an annual tribute of three hundred thousand, with the office of Dewan* of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa The practical result of this arrangement was that the English received the revenues, and made themselves responsible for the defence of the territory, while the civil administration remained for a time in the hands of a native minister †

His place in Anglo Indian history

Clive was not a great statesman like Hastings, for, though he knew how to find expedients for overcoming difficulties when there was no time for hesitation, he founded no lasting political system But he will live in history as the Founder of our Indian Empire Not only was he the first of the builders of three generations who laboured at the imperial fabric, like the families of workmen who, from father to son, reared the cathedrals of the Middle Age, but he was in some sort its architect also Here too the analogy holds good. There were more architects than one, and all did not follow the same style But Clive, though he would only lay the foundation himself, forecast in his mind the nature of the pile He foresaw that, with or against their will, his successors would have to extend its dimensions ‡

Failure of Clive's system of government

The years that followed Clive's departure were years of misery for the people of Bengal, and of shame for the English The system of divided government established by Clive had no vitality. The native administrators oppressed the peasants, and embezzled the revenues the servants of the Company found it profitable to connive at these abuses, and neglected the interests of their masters At last the Directors appointed Warren Hastings Governor of Bengal, and appealed to him to rescue their affairs from destruction

1772. Warren Hastings

Hastings soon justified the confidence which had been reposed in him He snapped the rotten chain that bound his masters in mock allegiance to the Mogul Emperor, and proclaimed them to be, what they really were, independent lords of

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* Minister of Finance Till 1772 the Company were only nominally Dewan

† Aitchison's *Treaties, Engagements, and Sunnuds*, vol I pp 60–69

‡ Malcolm's *Political History of India*, vol II pp 16–20

Bengal. He transferred the internal administration from a native minister to the servants of the Company. He created a system of police, justice, and revenue, which it is easy for doctrinaires to revile, but which was the best that could have been devised under the circumstances of the time. By hiring out the Company's battalions to the Vizier of Oude for the suppression of the turbulent Afghans that tyrannised over Rohilcund, he crippled a dangerous neighbour, and placed four hundred thousand pounds to the credit of his employers. Suddenly, however, the work in which he took such pride was rudely interrupted. The abuses which he had begun to remedy had roused the attention of English statesmen to Indian affairs; and the Regulating Act of 1773, which placed the Government of British India in the hands of a Governor-General and a Council of four, with power over the other Presidencies of Bombay and Madras, and established a supreme court of judicature at Calcutta, independent of the Council, was the fruit of their labours. Hastings was the first Governor-General. The new constitution, while it left the entire load of responsibility upon his shoulders, gave him no more power than any of his colleagues.* This radical defect became apparent when Clavering, Monson, and Francis, the three Councillors that had been sent out from home, arrived; for they at once began a career of factious opposition to their chief. This notorious triumvirate threw the affairs of the other Presidencies into confusion by their rash interference, postponed all important business to a malicious investigation into the past acts of the Governor-General, and encouraged the natives to bring accusations against him, and despise his authority. The people of Bengal had come to regard his cause as lost, when, by the bold stroke of bringing a counter-charge against the infamous Brahmin, Nuncomar, the foremost of these unscrupulous accusers, he recovered his position, and discomfited his colleagues. Nuncomar was executed by the sentence of the Chief Justice, Impey. At the sight of his ignominious death, every Hindoo trembled, and

His early measures

1773-4

The Regulating Act

Hastings thwarted by Clavering, Monson, and Francis

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* Hastings, as he himself explains in his *Memoirs relative to the state of India*, pp 154–7, in some measure remedied this defect by disobeying his instructions when he thought it requisite, whatever his personal risk might be

began to regard Hastings as a man to whom all must bow. So long, indeed, as Hastings was outvoted at the council-table, he could carry into effect none of those great measures for the benefit of India and the establishment of British power which he had long contemplated but, strong in the love and trust of the English community, he could and did do something to check the rash folly of his colleagues, and he waited for his triumph with a patience which was thrown into stronger relief by his burning enthusiasm for the public service His triumph came at last The death of Monson left him supreme And, though Francis had poisoned the minds of the ministers against him, and the Directors, who had supported him in his earlier measures, had withdrawn their favour, there was a crisis at hand which forbade them to supersede him They recognised the genius of the man whom they had persecuted, and allowed him to save them

1776

He recovers power

At that time the fame of England had sunk to its nadir Twenty years before it had risen to its zenith Let philosophical historians search as deep as they will for the general causes which had wrought this change To plain understandings the explanation is clear enough Pitt had ruled in 1758 but in 1778 Lord North was the chief of a Government that could not rule America and half Europe were banded against England, but India was the rock against which the storm broke in vain, for India was ruled by a man who joined to the fiery zeal of a Pitt the calmness of a Marlborough

Two great dangers the Governor-General saw and repelled. Hearing that the French were about to league themselves with the Mahrattas for the overthrow of our empire, he showed his knowledge of the temper of Asiatics by striking the first blow, sending an army across India through unknown country to humble the Mahratta power And, when Hyder, the usurping ruler of Mysore, carried his arms to the environs of Madras, and the feeble Presidency trembled before the power which its rashness had provoked, he lost not a moment in despatching reinforcements under Eyre Coote, who rescued Southern India by the victory of Porto Novo.

How he saved the empire

1779

1781

But even Hastings could not save an empire without money, and the Company's treasury was nearly empty. To replenish

it, he demanded a contribution from Cheit Singh, the so-called Rajah of Benares, a tributary of the Company, following a custom which superior powers in India had ever observed. Cheit Singh, however, showed no alacrity to come to the aid of his over-lord, and, to punish him for his delay and evasion, Hastings went in person to Benares, to exact from him a heavy fine. But the few English soldiers whom he took with him were unprovided with ammunition, and badly commanded For a time Hastings was checked by insurrection but it was speedily repressed by the English troops who, in their enthusiastic love for him, hastened up from the nearest posts to his rescue, and was punished by the deposition of the Rajah and an increase of the tribute due from his successor Still, more money was sorely needed, and Hastings, in his extremity, looked to Oude, the Vizier of which province, squandering his revenues upon his own pleasures, had long neglected to pay an English brigade which protected him The money was obtained by confiscating the hoarded treasures of the late Vizier, which the Begums of Oude, the mother and grandmother of the reigning prince, had unlawfully retained

1781

1782

Outcry against him

These dealings of Hastings with the Rajah of Benares and the Begums of Oude formed the subject of two of the charges brought against him at the famous trial in Westminster Hall It would be impossible in a chapter like this to enter into a detailed examination of the justice of those charges, or the general morality of his administration It will be enough to say that no other than that policy which Burke held up to execration could have saved the empire in the most momentous crisis through which it has ever passed, and that those who condemn the morality of that policy must not shrink from the inevitable conclusion that the empire which has been charged with the mission of civilising India, and which gives England her great title to respect among the nations of Europe, was erected, could only have been erected upon a basis of iniquity * But men are slowly beginning to see that the views of Hastings's policy which Burke, in bitter but honest hatred, and Francis, in the malice of disappointed rage, disseminated, are untrue. The

* See my article on "Wellesley," in the *Westminster Review* of April, 1880, pp 349-51

genius of Clarendon taught four generations of Englishmen to detest the name of the hero who had saved their liberties. The fate of Hastings has been similar But the day will come when, in the light of a more extended knowledge of the history of British India, his political morality will be vindicated

The resignation of Hastings marks the close of the third act in the drama of Anglo-Indian history Clive had been forced by the quarrel thrust upon him to realise Dupleix's imperial visions He had founded an empire It was left to Hastings to create a government, and to organise and set on foot its numerous branches He had conceived, moreover, and had begun to carry out the idea of grouping the native states in alliance round the power of England, which had practically taken the place of the effete Mogul empire, and was therefore bound to take upon itself the duties, and yield the protection expected by all natives from the Paramount Power

1785

But this great idea was destined to be forgotten for a time The malignant influence of Francis had borne its fruit At home men cried out against the policy of Hastings, and Lord Cornwallis* was sent out to inaugurate a reign of peace and non-intervention and armed with that power of acting on his own responsibility, even against the judgment of his Council, which Hastings had sought for in vain He tried to carry out the wishes of his masters but, though he was a man of peace, he was not a man to look on tamely while a new enemy arose to threaten our power The great Hyder had left a son Tippoo, who inherited some of his father's ability, and all his love of aggrandisement and hatred of the English Provoked by an attack which he had made on an ally of the British Government, Cornwallis resolved to punish him, and, after an unlucky campaign conducted by his generals, went in person to the seat of war, fought his way to the gates of Seringapatam, and there dictated terms of peace

Lord Cornwallis

War with Tippoo

1790
1791-2

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* After the resignation of Hastings, Macpherson served as *locum tenens* until the arrival of Cornwallis There were several other instances in which, owing to an interval between the departure of one Governor-General and the arrival of his successor, a Company's servant was obliged to hold the reins of government temporarily, but I have not thought it necessary to allude to them in the text

Influenced by public opinion and by that strong disinclination to all extension of territory which the Directors had already begun to show,* he only crippled the Sultan when he should have destroyed him. Such a half-hearted policy bore its natural fruit The evil day was only put off, for a few years later Wellesley was forced to annihilate Tippoo's power at a cost of blood and treasure which would have been saved if he had been disarmed in time. But the Directors shrank from becoming emperors, for they feared that, by so doing, they would suffer as merchants

Balance of power

The aim of Cornwallis's policy was to maintain the peace of India by the old-fashioned European plan of preserving a balance of power among the chief states The theory of the balance of power, however, takes for granted in individual states, if not unselfishness, at least some sort of fellow-feeling suitable to the members of a family of nations, some serious desire to keep the bonds of peace intact But among the powers of India these conditions were wholly wanting Their political education was not sufficiently advanced for them to understand that, even for nations, pure selfishness cannot be expedient Cornwallis saw clearly enough that the English Government ought to stand in the place of the father of this family of nations but it was reserved for a greater ruler to see that the family must, for some time and for their own good, be treated not as intelligent adults, but as disorderly and deceitful children.

The Permanent Settlement

The war with Tippoo was the central event of Cornwallis's foreign policy His reign is equally remembered for the judicial and fiscal reforms which he carried out The English had hitherto been content to follow the old Mogul system for the collection of the land-revenue of Bengal Under that system, the privilege of collecting the revenue had been from time to time put up to auction to native collectors, who were known as Zemindars but no attempt had been made to ascertain and definitely fix the amount which the cultivators might fairly be called upon to pay As, however, under this system, the revenue was collected in a very irregular and unsatisfactory manner, the Directors instructed Cornwallis to introduce some reform The

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* *The Cornwallis Correspondence*, vol ii pp 144, 158, Wilks's *Hist of Mysoor*, vol iii pp 251-2

result was the famous Permanent Settlement, by which the Zemindars were raised to the position of landlords, and engaged in return to pay a fixed annual rent-charge to the Government

1793

The Permanent Settlement was a sad blunder Cornwallis had indeed tried to learn something about the landed interests with which he had to deal but he did not realise the vast extent and intricacy of the subject Preoccupied by English ideas of land tenure, his mind was too narrow and too destitute of sympathetic force to seize the notion that a different set of ideas might prevail in India, and he therefore naturally leaped to the conclusion that, as the Zemindars were the highest class connected with land, they either were, or ought to be constituted landed proprietors * The result of his action may be told in a few words The inferior tenants derived from it no benefit whatever The Zemindars again and again failed to pay their rent-charges, and their estates were sold for the benefit of the Government

Though Cornwallis was not a ruler of the first rank, in one respect at least he left his mark upon the Indian service He would not countenance jobbery, even when Royal petitioners asked favours of him, and he tried to remove the temptations to corruption to which the Company's servants were exposed, and to raise their standard of efficiency, by endeavouring to procure for them adequate salaries

Character of Cornwallis

Cornwallis was succeeded by Sir John Shore, a conscientious painstaking official, who had worked his way, step by step, to the head of the Government, but whose dread of responsibility made him unfit to rule The great political event of his administration was a war between the Mahrattas and the Nizam The Mahrattas were the aggressors the Nizam was an ally of the British, and

Sir John Shore Non intervention

* "According to English ideas someone must be proprietor, and with him a settlement should most properly be made, but we did not for a long time see that different parties may have different degrees of interest without altogether excluding others, and hence the long discussions on the question who were the actual proprietors, when in fact the contending parties had different but consistent interests in the same land—Government as rent-receivers, Zemindars as delegates of Government, and the communities as having possession and entire management of the soil "—Mr (now Sir) George Campbell's *Modern India and its Government*, pp 301-2 See also Raikes's *Notes on the North-Western Provinces of India* pp 41-64

importunately pressed them for the assistance to which he was morally entitled, but Shore was afraid to depart a hair's breadth from the policy of neutrality which his masters had prescribed The result was that the Nizam was completely beaten, and lost all confidence in the English, whose alliance had proved to be a sham, while the power of the Mahrattas was unduly exalted, and for years their turbulence and greed caused anxiety to the Paramount Power

Marquess Wellesley

In 1798 Shore was succeeded by Lord Mornington, better known by his later title of Marquess Wellesley, a young Irish peer who had already distinguished himself by an elaborate speech in which he had thundered against the French Revolution, and pleaded for the continued prosecution of the anti-Gallican crusade The appointment was made not a moment too soon, for another great crisis in Anglo-Indian history was at hand, and, if Shore had remained in office much longer, the empire might have been lost

Critical state of the empire

The European war was at its height Napoleon was in the full tide of success, and had extended his views of conquest to Asia If he had triumphed in Egypt, and pushed on into India, the leading native states would probably have welcomed his arrival Our allies, the Nizam and the Nabob of the Carnatic, were not to be depended upon The one, as has been shown, had become estranged from us, and now put his trust in a strong force, officered by Frenchmen, which he kept in his pay. The other was unable to govern his own country, and, so far from helping us, was continually asking for our aid Tippoo was intriguing against us with every prince who would listen to him Hating us with all the force of Mahometan bigotry, inherited enmity, and the thirst of vengeance, he was only waiting an opportunity to attack us The Mahrattas would have been not less dangerous if they had not been disunited but, as it was, their foremost chief, Dowlut Rao Sindia, was gaining power every day, and, like the Nizam, had an army, officered by Frenchmen, in his service. These very French adventurers were a separate source of danger. They had the disgrace of old defeats to wipe out, and visions of conquest to gratify Dupleix, Bussy, and Lally had been frustrated in their open endeavours to create a Franco-Indian empire but there was a lurking danger not less formidable in the presence of General Perron at the head of Sindia's battalions.

Wellesley saw the danger, and faced it. The conduct of Tippoo, who rashly allowed it to be known that he had sent an embassy to the Mauritius to ask for French aid, gave him the opportunity of striking the first blow He instantly demanded guarantees for the preservation of peace. Eager to gain time, Tippoo evaded the demand until Wellesley's patience was worn out Converting the nominal alliance of the Nizam into an effective reality by disarming his French contingent and substituting for it a British force, Wellesley directed the armies of Bombay and Madras, strengthened by a native contingent furnished by the Nizam, to converge upon Seringapatam After a short and uniformly successful campaign, the Sultan's capital was won, and he himself fell in the assault His sons were pensioned off, and kept in honourable confinement, while the representative of the old Hindoo dynasty, which Hyder had displaced, was proclaimed as Rajah of a portion of the conquered country The remainder was divided between the British Government and the Nizam, whose share was afterwards appropriated to the payment of an additional subsidiary force which was to be kept in his service Finally, the government of the restored dynasty of Mysore was placed under the friendly supervision of an English Resident

Overthrow of Tippoo

1798

1799

The overthrow of Tippoo, which re-established British prestige, gave a blow to the hopes of the French, and struck terror into the minds of aggressive native princes, was the key-stone of Wellesley's policy The aim of that policy may be described as the establishment of the supremacy of the British power for the joint benefit of the British and of the people of India. The native powers were to be grouped in alliance round the central power of the British Government, which was to defend them at their own cost, and, in some cases, to administer their civil affairs or those of a part of their territories as well, in others merely to reserve the right of interference In other words, Wellesley, strengthened by the authority and resources which had been denied to Hastings, set himself to develop the far-reaching conception which the latter had originated The grand idea of pressing this consolidated Anglo-Indian Empire into the service of the British Empire itself, and forcing it to take its part in the overthrow of Napoleon, was Wellesley's own

Policy of Wellesley

Let us see how he worked it out A treaty which he had concluded with the Nizam had bound him to defend that prince against the attacks of the Mahrattas. With the view of taming this restless people, Wellesley tried to draw their nominal head, the Peishwa, Bajee Rao, within the circle of subsidiary alliance.* The reluctance of this prince to surrender his independence was at last overcome by his fear of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, a rising Mahratta chieftain, whose family name is so often mentioned in connexion with that of Sindia The treaty of Bassein marked the change in the Peishwa's condition But Sindia and the Mahratta Rajah of Berar, who feared that they too would have subsidiary alliances forced upon them, and no longer be allowed to prey upon their weaker neighbours, resented the treatment of their nominal head, and compelled the Governor-General to conquer them It was in the war by which this conquest was achieved that the name of his brother, Arthur Wellesley, first became famous

October, 1800.

1802

Treaty of Bassein

Mahratta war

1803-4

Holkar, who held aloof from his brother chiefs, might have escaped, if his invincible love of plunder had not brought upon him the wrath of Wellesley but the campaign for his reduction was chequered by more than one disaster, and he was not finally subdued till after Wellesley had left India

1804-5

Thus one power after another was drawn into the number of dependent states Unhappily, however, Wellesley had neglected one rare opportunity which the fortune of war had thrown in his way In the campaign against Sindia, Delhi had fallen into our hands, and Wellesley had been called upon to decide the Emperor's fate Though the power of the Great Mogul had long faded away, his title still attracted the superstitious veneration of the natives, and fifty years later it was the spell that drew successive armies of mutineers to the focus of Delhi. If, instead of perpetuating this phantom dynasty, Wellesley had boldly proclaimed that his Government had succeeded to its rights, an element which was to give strength and a show

Treatment of the Mogul Emperor

* For some remarks on the subsidiary alliance system see the article on Wellesley," already quoted.

of dignity to the Indian Mutiny might have been destroyed The native states were ready enough to claim the protection of our Paramount Power. They would have repaid it for this protection by their attachment, if it had not shrunk from avowing itself to be what it was *

Three years before, Wellesley had applied the same principle that inspired his Mahratta policy to his dealings with Oude That country lay directly in the path of any invader who might meditate an attack on the British possessions from the north-west, and a conqueror might have easily overrun it on his march, for its Government was powerless, and its army was a rabble Wellesley converted it from a source of weakness into a bulwark of the British provinces by his favourite method The Vizier was obliged to accept an English subsidiary force, and to cede a large portion of his territory for its support But one great evil sprang from this arrangement. The government of Oude was even then the worst in India. The Vizier wasted part of his revenues in shameful self-indulgence, and hoarded the rest The farmers of the revenue extorted from the peasantry all that they could, and the latter toiled on, barely supporting life on the remnant of their earnings which the policy, not the humanity of their masters allowed them Wellesley, however, shrank from interfering in the internal administration The Vizier's officers were therefore supported in their exactions by British bayonets Wellesley's excuse is that, distrusted as he was by the Directors, he did not feel himself strong enough to assume the government of the country, which was the only way of remedying its unhappy condition He doubtless expected that his successors would soon be forced to take this final step For more than fifty years, however, it was not taken

Dealings with Oude

1801

The Nabobs of Tanjore, of Surat, and of the Carnatic were obliged to transfer the administration of their territories to the British Government, and to content themselves with liberal pensions and high-sounding titles

1799, 1800, 1801 Tanjore, Surat, and the Carnatic

While the consolidation of the English power in India went on apace, Wellesley carried out his idea of making it a living

* See an interesting lecture by Mr S J Owen, entitled "Anglo-Indian Rule historically considered"

element of the British Empire by sending an expeditionary force up the Red Sea to co-operate in the expulsion of the French from Egypt If the force did nothing else, it at least showed how a strong ruler had been able to develop the resources of India, and how he could turn them to account

1801
Red Sea expedition

Such was Wellesley's external policy The same imperial spirit which had animated it breathed through every part of his administration For the benevolence with which he regarded the natives of India did not lead him to contemplate the possibility of granting them self-government His ideal was that they should be ruled for their own good by an all-powerful despot, and that the despot should take him for his model Nor were they to be governed solely for their own good They were to repay the care of their rulers by communicating to them the benefit of their commercial resources Fondly hoping that he could infuse something of his own enthusiasm into his employers, Wellesley urged them to develop these resources by the encouragement of private trade, and to recede, if only a few steps, from the selfish position of monopolists. But it was in vain for this enthusiastic Governor to expect a trading company to sympathise with his far-reaching views The anomaly which suffered India to be ruled from Leadenhall Street was already evident.

Views and character of Wellesley

It was the sagacity which enabled Wellesley to foresee the direction which imperial progress must take, and the energy with which he hastened that progress, that gave a special character to his reign He saw that endless disturbances must be looked for until the English should become supreme it is his merit that he did not adopt the half-measures which would have pleased his masters, but boldly and uncompromisingly carried out his views to their logical conclusion. No ruler was ever better served but few rulers have had in the same degree the enthusiasm which inspires others, and the charm which wins their personal devotion Generals like Arthur Wellesley, and Lake, and Harris, diplomatists like Malcolm and Barry Close worked out his designs, and all worked for the love of him whom they served

When he had gone, however, the great work which he had taken up was again interrupted, for his successor could only see its momentary disadvantages, and lacked the foresight

which could wait for its final triumph The Directors were tired of costly victories, and looked about for a ruler who would spare their army, and replenish their treasury In an evil hour for his reputation, the aged Cornwallis, broken as he was by toil and disease, was persuaded to go out once more As far as he could, he reversed Wellesley's policy, and meditated the withdrawal of the British protection from those states to which Wellesley had extended it He did all this in the purest spirit of humanity, for he believed that Wellesley's interference had been unjust But, happily for India and for himself, he died little more than two months after his arrival.

1805 Second administration of Cornwallis

His successor, Sir George Barlow, carried out his views. He aimed at extricating his employers, at any cost, from the temporary financial embarrassment into which the policy of Wellesley had plunged them, and complacently declared his conviction that he would best promote the security of the British Government by leaving the rajahs free to quarrel among themselves This ignoble policy bore its inevitable fruit when the strong began to prey upon the weak, and when the natives of India cried out that the Paramount Power, which was bound to keep the peace, was shirking its responsibilities Still more appalling examples, however, were needed to convince the home authorities of the weakness of this policy In 1807 they sent out Lord Minto to succeed Barlow, and to walk in his footsteps When, however, the new Governor-General came to survey the political prospect from Calcutta, he began gradually to unlearn the opinions which he had held so confidently at home. Without being a ruler of the first order, he was a sensible and firm, though moderate statesman, who had not indeed the high courage and the rare fearlessness of responsibility which can initiate a great policy, and execute it in spite of the remonstrances of a timid or ignorant directory, but who might be trusted to fall into no weakness which would compromise the dignity of his government, and, though his reign was undistinguished by any event that serves as a land-mark in Anglo-Indian history, it witnessed some useful measures for the maintenance of internal peace, and for the repression of French ambition, and is interesting as the transition period which preceded the final realisation of Wellesley's views by the Marquess of Hastings.

Sir George Barlow

Lord Minto

Immediately after his arrival, he was struck by the anarchy which Barlow's inaction had encouraged among the freebooting chiefs of Bundlecund, a part of which country the Peishwa had ceded to Wellesley for the support of his subsidiary force He instantly sent an army to punish their insolence, and, having thus done something to restore internal order to India, he prepared to meet a danger which threatened it from without The famous Runjeet Singh, who had already crushed down the Sikhs of the Punjaub, was eager to extend his power by subjugating their brethren on our side of the Sutlej The Governor-General saw the danger but his task in meeting it was a complicated one, for, while repressing Runjeet's thirst for aggrandisement, he had also to persuade him to refuse a passage through his territories to the French, who were believed to be still meditating an invasion of India His choice of an ambassador revealed the same knowledge of character that had shown itself in Wellesley's advancement of Malcolm 'For it was Charles Metcalfe who curbed the ambition of Runjeet Singh

Bundlecund

Runjeet Singh

Minto's dealings with the Afghan freebooter, Ameer Khan, showed how his awaking zeal for imperialism was moderated by his fear of the Directors' displeasure This man, who had been a companion of Holkar in his plundering raids, had attacked the Rajah of Nagpore*, and, when Minto interfered for the protection of his ally, he apologised to his masters for this display of energy by representing it as a necessary step for the prevention of a dangerous alliance between two Mahometan rulers like the Ameer and the Nizam When, however, the baffled Ameer invaded Rajpootana to give his predatory followers the plunder without which they could not live, Minto dared not interfere, and more victims were sacrificed to the idol of non-intervention.

1808 Ameer Khan

Outside India, however, the Governor-General found a field for his energy in which he might move secure of the Directors' approval, for here the object was, not to spend money on the protection of distressed dependents, but to protect the Company's commerce from the French privateers which infested the Indian Ocean

Conquest of the Mauritius and Java

* By this title the former Rajah of Berar had been known since his subjection by Wellesley

By the capture of the Mauritius, which had served as a depôt for the plunder they had thus acquired, and by the conquest of Java, which they had wrested from the Dutch, Minto completed his scheme of defence against Napoleon

1810
1811

He was succeeded by a statesman who, like him, came to India strongly prejudiced against the policy of Wellesley, but, when he found out his mistake, threw himself, in a more daring spirit, into the task of developing that policy It was the discovery of the evil wrought by the Pindharies that caused this sudden change in Lord Hastings's views These notorious marauders had, in former days, often followed in the train of the Mahrattas, and now, roving about the country in armed bands, plundered, destroyed, and massacred on their own account The Directors, who could not, like Lord Hastings, see for themselves what the state of India was, refused to listen to him when he insisted that the evil must be rooted out But Lord Hastings found another way of serving the impracticable court Some twelve years before, Wellesley had made a commercial treaty with the Goorkahs of Nepaul, but, finding it impossible to keep at peace with them, had broken off all relations in 1804 Since then the Goorkahs had been steadily encroaching upon British territory along the line of frontier north of Hindostan, in defiance, or rather in contempt of the mild remonstrances of Barlow and his successor At last, however, even Minto had been provoked to send an ultimatum, and Hastings promptly followed it up by another If it had been sent in time, the war which followed might have been averted, for, even after the long experience which they had had of our meek forbearance, there was not unanimity in the Goorkah council which decided to fight. Lord Hastings had to wait long for his triumph, for of four generals whom he sent at the head of separate columns to invade Nepaul all but one failed, and the Goorkahs were enemies to be respected But the veteran Ochterlony, who had studied war under Eyre Coote, atoned for the failures of his colleagues Fortress after fortress fell before him as he climbed the Himalayas, and at last the capture of the crowning stronghold of Maloun decided the war The Goorkahs sued for peace, and were obliged to surrender the districts of which they had robbed us, and to cede some valuable mountain territory

1813
Lord Hastings

Nepaulese war

1815

Subjection of the Pindharies and the Mahrattas

Meanwhile the unchecked insolence of the Pindharies had reached its height Fresh from his triumph in the north, Lord Hastings resolved to chastise them In the firmness of his righteous resolve he would have risked any official displeasure but in fact he was not forced to disobey his instructions, for the stories of pillage and murder which had reached home caused a reaction of feeling which called for the destruction of the predatory hordes. An unexpected difficulty, however, presented itself. The Mahrattas sympathised with the Pindharies, and they had still some power for evil The treaty of Bassein had not crushed the Peishwa's restless ambition, or destroyed the irregular but mischievous attachment of his feudatories He was discovered to be conspiring with the Pindharies, with Sindia, and with Holkar for the restoration of his supremacy, and the subversion of our power

There is no more intricate page in Indian history than that which describes his intrigues and the measures by which they were baffled Fortunately Elphinstone, the Resident at his Court, was a man who could thread the most confused mazes of Mahratta treachery Aware of what was passing in the Peishwa's mind, he sought to checkmate him by a treaty which bound him to cede territory and forbear from all communication with any Power but our own Sindia and Ameer Khan, to each of whom the Pindharies looked for help, were likewise bound over to keep the peace, and the robbers themselves were hunted down by our soldiers, while those who escaped the British bayonets were massacred by the exasperated villagers whom they had persecuted. Meanwhile, Sindia and Ameer Khan had adhered to their engagements but the Peishwa and Holkar had turned traitors, and the Rajah of Nagpore had joined them. One after another the treacherous princes were punished Defeated at Seetabuldee, the Rajah of Nagpore fled, and his territories passed under the nominal rule of a boy Rajah, in whose name an English Resident established a wise administration The army of Holkar, for he himself was only its tool, was beaten by Malcolm on the field of Mehidpore, and Holkar was obliged to receive a subsidiary force, while his administration was left to his ministers, who were to act under the advice of a British Resident. But it would have been madness to treat the

1817

1817-18

1817

Peishwa with such leniency While he retained a vestige of authority, there would have been a constant temptation to the Mahratta chieftains to rally round him. His lands were therefore annexed, and his suzerainty was annihilated. but he himself received from the British Government that generous liberality which has done so much to reconcile their fallen foes to the inevitable loss of power

1818

Thus, by the final overthrow of that Hydra-headed Empire, which, for more than a century and a half, had disturbed the peace of India, Lord Hastings had completed the development of Wellesley's policy, and had proclaimed by his deeds to the people of India that the Paramount Power, from which they expected protection, was able to afford it He had done more than this. Despising the vulgar cry that the ignorance of the natives was the best security of our rule, for he knew that no justification could be pleaded for a rule supported by such means, he had promoted the establishment of native schools and native journals, and thus encouraged the people to take advantage of the peace which he had given them

Lord Hastings's work

This able man was succeeded by a Governor of another stamp Lord Amherst's reign is remembered as the epoch of the first Burmese war but he himself is almost forgotten This war, like that with the Goorkahs, was caused by the aggression of a barbarous people, which, encouraged by years of tame endurance, culminated in an invasion of British territory but here the resemblance ended The Goorkahs had been the most formidable warriors that we had ever encountered the Burmese were the most contemptible Nothing but the unhealthiness of their climate, and the military strength of their territory made their reduction difficult. But these obstacles were overcome by the force which was sent to Rangoon, and which, after a two years' campaign, fought its way to Ava, the Burmese capital, and dictated a peace which secured the cession of Assam, Arracan, and Tenasserim

1823

Lord Amherst First Burmese war

1824

1826

The one other important event of this administration revealed the weakness of Amherst, and gave a fresh illustration of the impracticability of non-intervention. The Rajah of Bhurtpore, a state which Wellesley had brought under British protection, died, and left,

Amherst and Ochterlony

his throne to an infant son. But it was rare indeed in those days for a helpless heir to be allowed to enter peaceably upon his rights. A cousin of the young Rajah seized the Government. Ochterlony, who was then Resident at Delhi, saw in this act of violence the seeds of a war which might convulse Central India, and took upon himself the responsibility of ordering a force to proceed towards Bhurtpore. Amherst countermanded its advance, and reprimanded the old general for his undue assumption of authority. It was not to be expected that a soldier-statesman of fifty years' standing should submit to such an affront as this. Ochterlony resigned his post. But Amherst presently repented of his error, and the capture of Bhurtpore put an end to a general uneasiness amongst the native princes, who were not yet habituated to our supremacy, and had been excited by the strange news that a British army was waging war upon the opposite side of the Bay of Bengal.

1825

Capture of Bhurtpore

After this there was a hollow peace in the land for twelve years, for the principle of non-intervention was in the ascendant, and the English Residents at native courts were forbidden to interfere with the princes at the very stage in their political progress when they most needed wise counsel and restraining discipline. Lord William Bentinck, who succeeded Amherst in 1828, was the very man to carry out the theories of Indian government that prevailed in England, and give a last convincing proof of their falseness. A pattern Liberal statesman of the nineteenth century, overflowing with benevolence towards the natives, he was taught by the bitter lessons of seven years that, in dealing with Asiatics, humanitarianism is not humanity. A series of disputed successions, the curse of that era of Indian history, called for British interference; but Bentinck invariably refused to interfere until his inaction had produced its inevitable results, anarchy and massacre. We might wonder that he was so slow to learn from experience, if we did not know how hard it is to wrench oneself free from the influence of a cherished theory. Two instances in which his reluctant interference wrought a political change call for special mention.

Non-intervention

Lord William Bentinck

In Mysore, the boy Rajah whom Wellesley had set up after the overthrow of Tippoo, had been allowed to take the Govern-

ment into his own hands after twelve years of tolerably successful rule by his native minister under the friendly supervision of an English Resident. The Rajah's government was intolerable, and, after the Resident had warned him again and again without effect, his subjects took the remedy into their own hands, and revolted But these miserable rebels were repressed by our arms, because, forsooth, the Rajah was a protected prince Bentinck talked of perpetuating the Hindoo Government with more effectual restrictions on the Rajah's power, but ended by doing nothing, and the people suffered without redress until in 1833 the English Resident became a Commissioner, and the country became virtually a British province The Rajah of Coorg, the nephew of a prince who had been a cordial ally of the English in their wars with Tippoo, made himself notorious by the savage cruelty with which he treated his subjects Even Bentinck's theories were not proof against this test but, while he desired to relieve the people, he was still anxious that they should remain under the rule of a native Rajah, and was only persuaded to annex their country by their unanimous and loudly expressed desire to be transferred to the Company's Government

Mysore and Coorg

1830

1834

Even the briefest account of Bentinck's administration could not afford to leave unnoticed that great measure, known as the Settlement of the North-Western Provinces, which was begun in his time, and completed a few years after his departure

Settlement of the North Western Provinces 1833–42

When that portion of the country came under British rule, the settlement officers did their work in a very lax and haphazard fashion They tried to do justice to all parties but they knew little of the usages which had governed the tenure of land and the payment of the land revenue under native government their ignorance was freely traded upon by interested natives who, in many cases, contrived to get themselves registered as the proprietors of villages which did not belong to them, and therefore many of their decisions caused dissatisfaction. It was understood, however, that the settlements which they made might be superseded when the time for a more detailed investigation should arrive The first step towards such an investigation was taken in 1822, when a Regulation was published, setting forth the principles in accordance with which a lasting settlement was to be made but circum-

stances prevented further serious action from being taken till 1833 The officers to whom the work of the settlement was entrusted, laboured with the utmost zeal and perseverance to acquire such a full and accurate store of knowledge for a foundation as would enable them to avoid the false conclusions of their predecessors but the interests which they had to examine were so numerous and complicated that they often went astray Moreover, they started with the theory that the settlement ought to be made, village by village, with the actual proprietors of the soil, and not with middle-men They saw that the proprietary right generally belonged to single families, or to the village communities, which had survived here in far greater perfection than in Bengal But there was another important class whose rights had also to be considered, and whose generic name of Talookdars is perhaps familiar to all who take an interest in Indian affairs It was through the medium of these men that the native Government had collected the revenue, and, though they were technically only hereditary revenue-contractors, they were to all intents and purposes the territorial aristocracy The settlement officers, however, inspired by the famous Robert Mertins Bird, were full of the idea of promoting the greatest happiness of the greatest number they branded the Talookdars as a set of worthless drones, and they determined accordingly to deprive them of the privilege of settling for every foot of land to which they could not show a proprietary title precise enough to satisfy an English lawyer A few thoughtful men did indeed urge that these sweeping measures would destroy the attachment of the aristocracy to our rule, and that, if they ever turned against us, we should find the villagers, whom we had thought to conciliate, impelled by the force of old ties and old associations to side with their natural leaders These warnings, however, were unheeded, and their authors ridiculed as alarmists. The mere fact that the settlement aroused discontent does not indeed prove that the principles upon which it was based were false. But perhaps its authors would have succeeded better if they had reflected that the proprietary right was not the only right connected with the soil, and, while taking care to provide valid guarantees for the immunity of the village proprietors from extortion, had recognised the existing rights of the Talookdars to contract for the collection of the revenue.

Another class, known as the holders of rent-free tenures, escaped the grasp of the settlement officers only to fall under an investigation as searching as theirs These tenures, relics of the days of native administration, were of various origins, and many of them had been fraudulently acquired, while others, having been granted for services which had long ceased to be performed, had become mere sinecures If the English Government had had the inclination or the leisure to examine them when it had first established its rule, many of them would of course have been abolished but unfortunately action had been so long delayed that the holders had learned to regard their lands as secured to their families for ever The new school of officials, however, was indignant at the thought that so much land-revenue was lost to the state, and squandered by an unprofitable class The holders were accordingly called upon to prove the original validity of their titles Many of them asserted with truth that they had acquired their estates honestly, but could produce no documents in support of their word * Whatever opinions may be held as to the justice or the policy of this wholesale Resumption, it is certain that it awoke serious discontent and even disaffection

Resumption

Much bitter feeling was also aroused by the operation of the Sale Law, under which the estates of numerous landed proprietors were yearly put up to sale in satisfaction of debts, and bought generally by rich speculators or native Government officials This particular grievance was one of long standing The new-comers could never succeed in gaining the slightest hold upon the feelings of their tenants, who persisted in regarding their former landlords with unabated affection, and would at any moment have been ready, if called upon, to take down their spears and matchlocks, and help them to win back what they had lost

The Sale Law

It would be unjust, however, to hold Bentinck specially responsible for the evil results of measures which he did not originate, and, as his dealings with native states have been severely criticised in these pages, it is a duty to do honour to the strong

The strong side of Bentinck's administration

* See Extract from Board's Report to Government, dated 19 Sept 1856, on the "Revenue Administration of the Rohilcund Division for 1856" *Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, Feb 1858, pp 194-6

side of his administration. No Governor-General of India, no ruler known to history, ever laboured for the good of his people with a more single-minded devotion than he Among his reforms the best known is the abolition of the atrocious rite of suttee,* which only a man of the highest moral courage would have dared to carry out against the mass of religious prejudice which it stirred up But he made his good influence felt in every department of civil government It was he who gave the first great impetus to the material progress of the country Thus it was that he won the unique place which he holds in the history of British India, for the evil which he had unwittingly done has perished, but the good will remain and fructify for all time

1836

Lord Auckland's policy towards Persia and Afghanistan.

With the accession of Lord Auckland, Bentinck's successor, began a new era in Anglo-Indian history, in which the long-sown seeds of fresh political complications, which even now seem as far from solution as ever, began to put forth fruit All danger from French ambition had passed away but Russian intrigue was busy against us We had brought the danger on ourselves False to an alliance with Persia, which dated from the beginning of the century, we had turned a deaf ear to her entreaties for help against Russian aggression, and had allowed her to fall under the power of her tyrant, who thenceforth used her as an instrument of his ambition. The result of our selfish indifference appeared in 1837, when Persia, acting under Russian influence, laid siege to Herat, which was then under Afghan rule.

1838

While Herat was still holding out, the Shah was at last threatened with war, and raised the siege. Then was the time for Auckland to destroy the Russian danger once for all by making a friend of the power which seemed to be the natural barrier against invasion from the north-west After a long series of revolutions, Dost Mahomed, the representative of the now famous tribe of Baruckzyes, had established himself upon the throne, with the warm approval of the majority of the people, while Shah Sooja, the leader of the rival Suddozyes, was an exile. The ruling prince did not wait for Auckland to seek his friendship. He treated the Russian advances with contempt, and desired

* The custom of burning widows on the funeral piles of their husbands

nothing better than to be an ally of the English Auckland was urged to seize the opportunity It was in his power to deal Russia a crushing blow, and to avert those troubles which are even now harassing British statesmen He did not let slip the opportunity He flung it from him, and clutched at a policy that was to bring misery to thousands of families in England, in India, and in Afghanistan, and to prove disastrous to the political interests of all three countries

How did he justify his policy? He asserted that it was his duty to provide against future troubles in Afghanistan, for he could point to no existing ones, and he attempted to do this by dethroning a prince who had shown him nothing but good will, and by raising up in his stead the rival whom the bulk of the population detested For a time all appeared to go well, and the English were lulled into a fatal security So long as the chiefs and the mountain tribes were propitiated by British subsidies, the British army which remained at Cabul to protect Shah Sooja against his own subjects was in no danger But, when economy necessitated the withdrawal of the subsidies, the factitious attachment of the people to our rule died away There is no need to dwell upon the tragedies of 1841 and 1842 Those who are least interested in Indian history are not likely to forget how the Afghan mob murdered the British Envoy and his associates, how the British commander, putting faith in the chiefs of a people whom no treaties can bind, began that retreat from which but one man escaped to tell how sixteen thousand had perished, how poor Auckland, unmanned by the disaster, lacked the energy to retrieve it, how the heroic Sale* held out at Jellalabad till Pollock relieved him, how Auckland's successor, Lord Ellenborough, dreading fresh disasters, hesitated to allow his generals to act till, yielding to their indignant zeal, he threw upon them the responsibility of that advance to Cabul which retrieved the lost prestige of our arms Thus closed the first act of a still unfinished drama

1842

After celebrating the triumph of the victorious army, Ellenborough sent Charles Napier to punish the Ameers of Scinde, who, emboldened by the retreat from Cabul, had violated a treaty which

Conquest of Scinde

* The leading spirit in the defence of Jellalabad was Captain Broadfoot

they had concluded with the British Government. The result of the war was the annexation of the country but the glories of Meeanee and of Hyderabad were overclouded by the dispute on the question of the guilt of the Ameers between Napier and James Outram.

1843

Less talked of at the time, but historically more important was Ellenborough's reconstitution of the British relations with the Sindia of the day Political disturbances had for some time agitated that prince's court, while his army had swollen to a dangerous size, and, like the Sikh army since Runjeet Singh's death, which had taken place a few years before, had passed beyond the control of the civil power In these two armies Ellenborough saw a danger which might disturb the peace of Hindostan He foresaw that the Sikh soldiers, released from the stern discipline of Runjeet Singh, would soon force a government which they despised to let them cross the Sutlej in quest of plunder Two years later his character as a prophet was vindicated, and, if he had not now, in anticipation of the invasion which then took place, disbanded the greater part of Sindia's army, and overawed the remainder by a native contingent under the command of British officers, the Sikhs would probably have joined their forces with the Mahrattas. It is impossible to estimate the magnitude of the danger which would then have threatened our power, and, when Ellenborough heard of the unexpected resistance which the Sikhs had opposed to his successor, he may well have thought that he had helped to secure the empire against the advent of a great crisis. But the Directors took a different view of their Governor-General's conduct of affairs In June, 1844, all India was astonished by the news that Ellenborough had been recalled He had helped to bring about his own downfall, for in the controversies with his masters in which he, like some of the ablest of his predecessors, had found himself involved, he had shown an unfortunate want of discretion but, though by bombastic proclamations and a theatrical love of display he had sometimes exposed himself to ridicule, many of his subordinates felt that in him they had lost a vigorous and able ruler.

Ellenborough's dealings with Sindia

His recall

Sir Henry Hardinge, who was raised to the peerage before the close of his administration, succeeded to the office of Governor-General, and waited anxiously for the breaking of

the storm which his predecessor had seen gathering The Sikhs, the Puritans of India, who were not strictly speaking a nation, but a religious brotherhood of warriors called the Khalsa, were animated by two passions equally dangerous to the peace of those around them, a fierce enthusiasm, half military, half religious, for the glory of their order, and an insatiable desire for plunder By giving them full scope for the indulgence of these passions, and by punishing all disobedience with merciless severity, Runjeet Singh had governed his turbulent subjects for forty years but, when he died, they broke loose from all control, and the weak Government of Lahore found that they could only save their own capital from being plundered by the Khalsa army by sending it to seek plunder in British territory Thus began the first Sikh war The British soldiers who marched to defend the line of the Sutlej found to their astonishment that the Sikhs were as formidable enemies as the Goorkahs, and they had already fought three desperate battles when the dearly bought victory of Sobraon decided the war in their favour

The Sikhs

1845 First Sikh war

1846

Hardinge was not a weak ruler but he lacked the foresight which gave additional value to Wellesley's decision in the use of victory Though many of the Sikh magnates declared that nothing less than the annexation of the Punjaub would deter the Khalsa army from striking another blow for supremacy, he resolved to give the people a chance of settling down quietly under their native rulers * He received one emphatic warning against the unsoundness of this policy, for, when he was about to withdraw the British army from the Punjaub, the Lahore Government assured him that such a measure would be the signal for the rise of the Khalsa against themselves At last he compromised the matter by consenting that Henry Lawrence, as British Resident, should have the guidance of the native Council of Regency to which the administration was to be committed.

Sir Henry Hardinge tries to maintain the native government of the Punjaub

* It was afterwards asserted by Henry and John Lawrence that Hardinge had not had the means of annexing the Punjaub On the other hand, Charles Napier and Havelock strongly recommended annexation, and such good soldiers would hardly have recommended a military impossibility *Life of Sir C Napier*, vol iii pp 430, 458, Marshman's *Memoirs of Sir H Havelock*, p 160

Many of the Sikh soldiers were disbanded: there were but few outward signs of discontent, and, in 1848, Hardinge handed over the government to Lord Dalhousie with the cheering thought that he had bestowed upon India the blessing of a lasting peace

The peace lasted just three months after his departure Surrounded by a staff of officers who all trusted in their chief, who have all left their mark upon Indian history, and of whom more than one will find mention in the story of the Mutiny, Henry Lawrence had laboured on at the reform of the Punjaub administration, but had never deluded himself into the belief that English rule, however beneficent, would be acceptable to a proud and only half-subdued nation But, in the midst of his labours, he had been forced to return to England for his health, and the insurrection for which he had been prepared broke out under his successor Its first aspect was that of a mere local disturbance Moolraj, the native viceroy of Mooltan, had long evaded payment of a succession duty which the Lahore Government had demanded from him before the outbreak of the first Sikh war Finding, however, that the British Resident would not hear of the delay to which the impotent Lahore Durbar* had submitted, he petulantly resigned his post the British officers who came to install his successor were murdered, and he instantly adopted the deed as his own, and called upon the people of all creeds to rise against the British It soon became clear that this was no isolated act of treachery The Khalsa sympathised with Moolraj Moreover, his crime was not punished with that promptitude which could alone have overawed the disaffected nation, for Lord Gough, the Commander-in-chief, feared to expose his army to the effects of a summer campaign But the inaction of the Commander-in-chief was put to shame by the vigour of a subaltern On his own responsibility, Herbert Edwardes, a young lieutenant of infantry, marched against Moolraj, defeated him, and forced him to retire behind the walls of Mooltan This act of resolution, however, was not so successful as it deserved to be Mooltan was obstinately defended against the reinforcements which were sent to co-operate with Edwardes Then Dalhousie

Henry Lawrence in the Punjaub

Second Sikh war

1848

* Ruling council

ordered the general advance of the British troops which he had postponed in deference to Gough's judgment. The cruel kindness of Hardinge had brought the miseries of a second conquest upon the Khalsa His successor resolved that the work should now be done once for all

It was so done, but at a heavy cost. There are many still living who remember the fierce burst of indignation which sent out Charles Napier to avenge the terrible slaughter of Chillianwallah. But, before Napier could arrive, Gough had atoned for the errors of his doubtful victory by the decisive battle of Goojerat. Dalhousie turned his conquest to account by bringing the Punjaub under British dominion It was the one step in his remorseless career of annexation that needed no apology One interruption alone marred the smoothness of the administrative progress which made the Punjaub the model province of the empire.

1849

Annexation of the Punjaub

Dalhousie began by entrusting the Government to a Board of three, Henry Lawrence, John Lawrence, and Charles Mansel, who was succeeded, in 1850, by Robert Montgomery The rapidity with which the province advanced towards civilisation, justified the partiality with which Dalhousie always regarded it Under a picked body of administrators who threw their whole heart into their work, and lived in camp for eight months of the year with their tents open to the humblest petitioners, the pressure of the taxes which Runjeet Singh had imposed was lightened, the people were forced to give up their arms, and to live peaceably with each other*, a strong and trustworthy police force was organised, dacoity† was almost entirely stamped out, a system of criminal law suitable to the character of the people was devised, slavery, infanticide, and the countless evils of a barbarous rule were suppressed, canals, bridges, and a network of great roads were constructed, and new regiments were organised for the protection of the country against the lawless hill-tribes It was because the Sikhs, as a conquered people, were prepared to accept the measures of their

Administration of the Punjaub

* "The Trans-Indus and Huzara population was exempted inasmuch as without arms they would be at the mercy of plundering hordes."—*General Report on the Administration of the Punjaub for the years* 1849-50, *and* 1850-51, p 37, par 182

† Gang-robbery

conquerors with submission, while the simplicity of Runjeet Singh's despotism, unencumbered by the mass of forms which thwarted the benevolent efforts of English officials in other provinces, had left the ground clear for the erection of an entirely new fabric of government, that the success of our rule in the Punjaub was so swift, and so complete

But there was not unanimity in the counsels of the famous trio who composed the Board Henry Lawrence, always a friend of the fallen, caused dissatisfaction to the Governor-General by the pertinacity with which he fought the battles of the Sikh Sirdars, the aristocracy of the Punjaub, whose past unfaithfulness he was unwilling to punish too severely Dalhousie finally esolved to give John Lawrence, whose views harmonised with is own, the undivided control of the province. But there is o doubt that the character of John's administration was modied by Henry's counsels, and, when old Punjaubees talk of he glorious history of their province in 1857, they love to lwell upon the fact that it was Henry who, by his noble characer and unresting energy, bequeathed to their administration he spirit to which that history was partly due

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The acquisition of the Punjaub, like almost every accession of territory which the empire had hitherto received, had been the result of conquest forced upon a reluctant Government But Dalhousie's other acquisitions were for the most part of a ifferent kind, and excited in his own time and after his death ontroversies more violent than those which had been excited y the acts of any Governor-General except Warren Hastings he passions, however, which fanned these controversies into ame are now well-nigh extinct: the direction in which opinion setting is clearly defined the evidence upon which a final idgment may be based is ample and open to every enquirer; id the time has therefore come when such a judgment may confidently pronounced Like Bentinck, Dalhousie belonged the school of modern Liberalism but, while the milder litical creed of the former bade him maintain the right of dependent native states to govern themselves even to their m destruction, the ardent proselytism of the latter would ve brought the same states under the uniform sway of a ternal government. There is not indeed any reason to ppose that Dalhousie set out for India with the resolve of tering upon a career of annexation but, as opportunities

for annexation arose which he regarded as lawful, he believed that he would be wanting in his duty to his country and to the people of India, if he failed to take advantage of them. It then became the aim of his policy to consolidate the Anglo-Indian Empire by the absorption of the native states that interrupted its continuity, to eradicate every remnant of native barbarism which he could reach, and upon the ground thus cleared to erect a brand new fabric of Western civilisation "I take this fitting occasion," he wrote, in a minute on the famous Satara question, "of recording my strong and deliberate opinion, that, in the exercise of a wise and sound policy, the British Government is bound not to put aside or neglect such rightful opportunities of acquiring territory or revenue as may from time to time present themselves, whether they arise from the lapse of subordinate states by the failure of all heirs of every description whatsoever, or from the failure of heirs natural, where the succession can be sustained only by the sanction of the Government being given to the ceremony of adoption according to Hindoo law The Government is bound in duty, as well as policy, to act on every such occasion with the purest integrity, and in the most scrupulous observance of good faith Whenever a shadow of doubt can be shown, the claim should at once be abandoned But, where the right to territory by lapse is clear, the Government is bound to take that which is justly and legally its due, and to extend to that territory the benefits of our sovereignty, present and prospective In like manner, while I would not seek to lay down any inflexible rule with respect to adoption, I hold that, on all occasions, where heirs natural shall fail, the territory should be made to lapse, and adoption should not be permitted, excepting in those cases in which some strong political reason may render it expedient to depart from this general rule"

The principles of adoption and of lapse, to which he here refers, require a brief explanation. No article in the Hindoo creed is held more tenaciously than that which teaches that a man can only escape punishment hereafter by leaving a son to offer sacrifice to his soul. The childless man therefore naturally cherished the right of adopting a son who would perform for him this sacred duty. But the custom of adoption had a political side as well. Childless princes adopted sons with the view not only of securing salvation, but of perpetuating their dynasties. No one could interfere with the right of a son so

adopted to inherit his father's private property, or to perform for him the duties of religion But it had always been clearly understood, and was admitted even by the most zealous supporters of the rights of native dynasties, that he could not succeed to the principality without the sanction of the Paramount Power The rulers who preceded Dalhousie had generally been ready to grant their sanction. but in more than one instance they had for special reasons withheld it, and in consequence certain minor principalities had lapsed to the British Government It was by the exercise of this right of lapse that Dalhousie annexed Satara, Nagpore, Jhansi, and several minor principalities He did not create the right he simply exercised it on a scale of unprecedented magnitude, because he believed it to be valuable, and possessed the rare courage that dares to push an opinion to its logical conclusion

It remains to be considered whether his opinion was right In his despatches he expended much eloquence and argument to show that his proceedings were technically justifiable, and there can be no doubt that he proved his point But the verdict of history on great political questions differs from legal verdicts in that it is not affected by technicalities If Dalhousie's annexations injured the interests of the people of the annexed states and of the British Government, it is useless to argue that they were technically valid If, on the other hand, they promoted those interests, they are independent of justification based upon technical grounds Had they been technically invalid, such invalidity would only require notice if it had given offence to native critics The only questions then that call for discussion are these did the annexations promote the interests of the British Government and of the people of the annexed states, and did they produce a disturbing effect upon native opinion? These questions may be easily and certainly answered The annexations consolidated the empire, strengthened its military communications, and added to its material resources Moreover, no well-informed man can doubt that, although they gave great offence to royal families and courtiers, they conferred lasting benefits upon millions of people, a large proportion of whom had suffered grievously from native misgovernment But it is not less certain that they aroused a feeling of uneasiness among many of those natives who were capable of observation and reflection. Such a result, however, was unavoidable, and furnished no argument against Dal-

housie's policy. Just as a child often cannot understand the motives of those who are responsible for his education, so the natives could not understand the motives that dictated the policy of annexation The unswerving regularity with which it was carried out, the absence of that provocation on their part, which had seemed to justify the annexations of former rulers, created in the minds of many of them an impression that the British Government was abandoning those principles of good faith which had raised it above earlier conquerors, and entering upon a new career of unscrupulous aggrandisement.*

Conquest of Pegu

Two other annexations remain to be recorded The successor of Amherst had tried hard to preserve friendly relations with the Burmese Court, but in vain; and, in 1840, the obstinate insolence of the Burmese King drove Auckland to give up the attempt to maintain a British Resident at his capital Though, however, repeated acts of petty tyranny to Europeans would have justified retribution, no further action was taken till after Hardinge's departure, for the costliness of the first Burmese war and the deadliness of the Burmese climate had not been forgotten At last Dalhousie felt himself obliged to vindicate British honour, and, after a rapid conquest, annexed Pegu

1852-3

Annexation of Oude

The annexation of Oude, the crowning act of Dalhousie's administration, differed widely in regard to the motives which dictated it and the manner in which it was carried out, from the annexations that have already been mentioned The reader may remember that Wellesley had prophesied that the Company's Government would sooner or later find itself obliged to assume the administration of that unhappy country Since his time one ruler after another had mourned over its wrongs, but had shrunk from taking the one decisive step that would have redressed them. Remonstrances and warnings had been tried in vain

* Sir R. Temple's *Men and Events of my Time in India*, pp 107, 109, 111, 113, Forjett's *Our Real Danger in India*, p 9, Arnold's *Dalhousie's Administration of British India*, vol ii pp 164–5, *Calcutta Review*, vol xlii p 183, vol. xxxiii, vol xxii, Sir C Jackson's *Vindication of the Marquis of Dalhousie's Indian Administration*, pp 9, 10, 12, 19, 20, Meadows Taylor's *Story of my Life*, pp 294, 357, *Parl. Papers*, vol. xxxix. (1849), p. 227, par 25–8, vol. xl. (1854, 55), p 70, par 5 I have also consulted a large number of books and pamphlets written in a spirit of hostility to Dalhousie

But, when Colonel Sleeman, the British Resident at Lucknow, after making a tour of inspection through the kingdom, reported the results of his observations, such a mass of wickedness was brought to light that a humane ruler could no longer shrink from fulfilling the threats which weaker men had been content to repeat in vain Nature had intended Oude to be the garden of India but its rulers were fast turning it into a desert If the king had been a despot, he might at least have controlled his barons, and kept the right of plundering in his own hands but his selfish indifference was worse than any tyranny No regular Government existed The one road to distinction was bribery The defenceless peasants were everywhere preyed upon by the nobles who desired the means of corruption, the revenue-collectors who were eager to grow rich, and the soldiers who were fain to supplement their scanty wages No pen could faithfully describe the sins of the oppressors or the miseries of the oppressed, and, if the picture could be painted, no humane man would suffer himself to look upon it For the worst of Roman proconsuls would have blushed at the iniquities wrought by the talookdars of Oude

The one remedy for such wrongs as these was for the British Government to assume the administration of the country, and, if the determination to do this had needed further justification, it would have been supplied by the unanimity with which Sleeman and Henry Lawrence, the sympathetic champions of the rights of native rulers, pleaded for the measure Dalhousie knew as well as any man that interference was called for, and, if he had shrunk from acting upon his knowledge, the admonitions of the Home Government would have forced him to be up and doing But he also knew that the Government of India was in great part responsible for the evils which its feebleness had for more than fifty years suffered to accumulate he remembered that the princes of Oude had always been faithful allies of his countrymen, and it is probable that these considerations so far unnerved him that he was unwilling to act with the inexorable resolution which had characterised his dealings with other native states The course which he personally wished to adopt was, not to annex the country, not even to insist upon assuming the administration, but, declaring that the treaty of 1801 * had been rendered null and void by

* See p 16 *supra*

the failure of the Government of Oude to fulfil its conditions, to withdraw the British troops by whose support the king was alone maintained upon his throne, and thus reduce him to the necessity of accepting a new treaty. But the English Cabinet, the Board of Control, and the Court of Directors, like almost every Anglo-Indian statesman whose opinion carried weight, felt that such a delicate mode of proceeding was uncalled for, and Dalhousie was accordingly authorised "to assume authoritatively the powers necessary for good government throughout the country" He loyally accepted the issue. "I resolved," he wrote, "to forego my own preferences, and, in dealing with Oude, to adopt the more peremptory course which had been advocated by my colleagues, and which was manifestly more acceptable to the Honourable Company" Accordingly, on the 4th of February, 1856, Colonel James Outram, the British Resident at Lucknow, presented a new treaty to the king, at the same time courteously warning him that, unless he accepted it, the royal title and the ample revenue, which the British Government was ready to guarantee to himself and his heirs, would be forfeited. Bursting into tears, the king declared that the British had robbed him of his all, and that it was useless for him to sign the treaty. Outram exhausted every argument to induce him to change his mind; but in vain. Three days afterwards therefore it was proclaimed "that the government of the territories of Oude is henceforth vested exclusively and for ever in the Honourable East India Company."

It remains to be seen what lines were to be laid down for the administration of the new province. Sleeman and Henry Lawrence had earnestly recommended that the revenues should be exclusively appropriated to the benefit of the people and of the royal family If Dalhousie had taken this advice, he would have given to the natives of India a convincing proof that his policy had been inspired, not by any thirst for aggrandisement, but by a single-minded devotion to their welfare, and might have repelled the imputation of bad faith which his past annexations had brought upon him But he decided that the British Government might fairly recompense itself for the labour which it was voluntarily undertaking on behalf of an oppressed people It was inevitable that the natives should put the most invidious interpretation upon his decision, and assume that, endeavouring to disguise his rapacity by a hypo-

critical profession of benevolence, he had simply clutched at an opportunity for extending the territory and swelling the revenue of the British Raj *

If, however, Dalhousie erred in rejecting the counsel of Sleeman and of Lawrence, the instructions which he laid down for the guidance of the officers who were intrusted with the administration of Oude were conceived in the purest spirit of humanity. The great object was to grant redress to the actual occupants of the soil, whom the talookdars had in many cases fraudulently or violently deprived of their rights It was ordered therefore that a summary settlement of the land revenue should be formed with the occupants This settlement, however, was to last for three years only, after which it was to be superseded by a permanent arrangement based upon a detailed investigation of the claims of all parties † How these instructions were followed, will be seen in a later chapter.

Enam Commission

The dangerous results which have been spoken of as flowing from the Settlement of the North-Western Provinces and the Sale Law were in full current in Dalhousie's time but, whatever judgment may be pronounced upon those measures, he was not responsible for them At the same time it must be mentioned that an Act was passed in the fifth year of his rule, which directed what was known as the Enam Commission to enquire into the titles of landowners More than twenty thousand estates were confiscated by the commissioners in the five years preceding the Mutiny; and in the Southern Mahratta country especially its decisions added seriously to the sum of agrarian discontent.

Case of the Nana Sahib 1853

The famous case of the Nana Sahib deserves a short notice. When the ex-Peishwa died, the son whom he had adopted, that Nana Sahib who, a few years later, was to win for himself an imperishable infamy, demanded, as his right, that his father's pension should be continued to him. His claim was rejected. The rejection was based upon the terms of the original agreement with the Peishwa, and to pronounce an *ex post facto* condemnation on its justice or its policy on the ground that the individual

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* Government.

† Jackson, pp 136, 139, 140, 144-7, Irwin's *Garden of India*, p. 179, Duke of Argyll's *India under Dalhousie and Canning*, p 22, *Parl. Papers*, vol. xliv (1857, 58), pp 1125, 1126.

who suffered from it wreaked a base revenge upon the power which had disappointed him, would be preposterous.*

Dalhousie's civilising measures

Meanwhile, Dalhousie was carrying out another set of measures which, though they reflected the greatest credit upon his administration, and were productive of immense benefit to the country, awakened distrust among the aristocracy of religion. The Hindoo priesthood had ever been the sole depositaries not only of sacred, but also of secular instruction. The recent introduction of the literature and science of Europe into India had done little to shake the blind trust of the masses in Brahmin infallibility. The outworks of the stronghold of superstition were indeed shaken when the clever young students who had studied Shakespeare, and Bacon, and Newton at the Government Colleges grew up to manhood, and communicated their knowledge to their families. But, when the ignorant natives saw trains rushing past at twice the speed of the swiftest Mahratta horsemen, on the rails which Dalhousie had laid down, and learned that messages could be transmitted instantaneously from end to end of the empire, along those lines of wire which they gazed at with wondering awe, it was felt that the stronghold itself was in danger. The movement for the education of native women, the contemplated law for permitting Hindoo widows to marry again, the inexorable suppression of the barbarous usages which scandalised Dalhousie, were supported by a few intelligent natives, but gave deep offence to the Hindoo Pundits, the Mahometan Moulvies, and the orthodox millions who still venerated their teaching.† There was no outward sign of discontent to offend the self-satisfaction with which this strong, austere, laborious man, surveyed his work upon the eve of his departure. Everywhere there was a great calm. But it was the calm that precedes a storm.

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Review of the effects of the first century of British rule

Let us pause for a moment to review the effects of a century of British rule. Few Englishmen care to learn how a handful of their countrymen established that rule, and steadily widened the sphere of its operation, for they do not know that they are

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* Jackson, pp. 54, 61.

† Arnold, vol. ii. p. 241; Evidence taken before the Court appointed for the Trial of the King of Delhi, p. 110 (*Parl. Papers*, vol. xviii. 1859); *Letters of Indophilus* (Sir C. Trevelyan) *to the Times* (3rd edition), p. 32.

refusing to look upon a unique historical drama, full of picturesque incident, and diversified by the conflict of characters of whom some would have been strange to Shakespeare's imagination,—gorgeous potentates, intriguing courtiers, subtle diplomatists, ambitious queens hatching plots in the recesses of their palaces, clan-chieftains founding empires, daring upstarts forcing their way by craft and violence to the command of armies and the conquest of kingdoms, cunning priests inspiring awe alike in king and noble, soldier and statesman, zemindar and ryot,* merchant and artisan; while suddenly the strong figure of the White Man appears in the midst, dominates all, evolves order out of chaos, bids the contending rulers hush their quarrels, and holds out hope to the suffering millions But, though each successive page of the drama contains fresh revelations of the dauntless courage, the adventurous generalship, the far-seeing statesmanship of the Englishman, it would have only a tragic interest if it did not bear witness also to his righteousness of purpose It had been with this purpose before him that he had given order, peace, and justice to the country which he had found a scene of anarchy, intestine war, and injustice, that he had disabled the monster, Famine, and looked forward to destroying it, that he had reclaimed vast tracts from the ravages of wild beasts, repressed crime, stimulated industry, and developed commerce Yet his rule had been no unmixed benefit Sometimes the very energy of his benevolence had intensified the evil which his ignorance had wrought At other times the faults of his character had led him astray An eminent Frenchman has characterised his government as 'just, but not amiable" That terse criticism exposes its weak side While the ruler had laboured for the material well-being of his subjects, he had too often failed to reach their hearts, and, in his calm sense of superiority, he had forgotten that his intrusive reforms might not always be appreciated It was not that the natives resented the thoroughness with which he exemplified the maxim, "Everything for the people, nothing by the people" Before the Mutiny, Asiatics could not understand what the rights of the people meant. They had no thought of self-government then, though the idea has since begun to dawn upon them, and perhaps, at some distant day, our training may fit them to realise it. They were accustomed

* Peasant-cultivator

to depend for their happiness upon the favour of their rulers; and they could appreciate the benefits of a strong and just rule. They might boast idly of their own superiority· but they were persuaded in their inmost hearts that the Europeans were their superiors It was only necessary for the master-race openly to assert its supremacy, to manifest the single-minded benevolence of its intentions, and it would have secured a willing obedience. But unhappily, while it had sometimes shrunk from avowing and righteously exercising the supremacy which it in fact possessed, it had too often provoked an unmerited distrust of its benevolence Its land legislation had, as has been pointed out, roused the ill-will of a class whom it was important to conciliate, and who complained that, having made use of their influence over the lower classes to conquer the country, it no longer cared to treat them with common civility It had heedlessly thrown a host of native officials out of employment by filling up their places, after each new conquest, with men of its own choice By occasional acts of indiscretion, it had shaken the old confidence in its tolerance. It had once been hailed by the victims of tyrannical princes as their deliverer But a new generation had arisen who felt no gratitude for the deliverance of their fathers from a tyranny which they had never suffered, and who, moreover, saw in the traditional deliverers actual conquerors

The reader who wishes to understand the feelings with which the rulers of India were regarded by the natives, must bear in mind, first of all, that the latter were marked off by boundaries of race, religion, government, or status into numerous groups, the respective characteristics of which were quite as dissimilar as those which distinguish the several peoples of Europe. He will perceive therefore that it is impossible to describe their feelings by any comprehensive generalisation To present as truthful a description as the available evidence will admit of, it will be necessary to approach the subject from different points of view.

It is certain that, with the exception of those who had been affected by the agitating influences which have lately been mentioned, the Hindoos were not antagonistic to the English on the score of religion. So long as they had no fear lest their own religion would be interfered with, they would be too apathetic to harbour any enmity against Christianity. Of the Mahometans, on the other hand, some did no doubt bitterly

resent the deprivation of the political supremacy which their fathers had enjoyed, and longed to pull down the aliens who had seized that supremacy, and to destroy them as enemies of Islam. But that these feelings were very far from being general, is proved by the records of the Mutiny. The bulk of mankind are not logical in their daily practice; and with many of the Mahometans the dictates of a proselytising religion were set aside by motives of self-interest, of honour, or of respect for strong and wisely exercised authority, motives which made them, if not loyal, at least submissive to British rule.*

Putting aside the question of religion, we may conclude that the mercantile and shop-keeping classes, all, in fact, who knew that their position and prosperity were staked upon the continuance of orderly rule, and would be liable to ruin amid the anarchy which would be sure to follow upon its subversion, were steady, if not loyal supporters of the Government, and were prepared to remain so just so long as it suited their convenience, in other words, so long as the Government was able to keep the upper hand, and protect them in the enjoyment of their gains. In some parts of the country, such as the Punjaub, Rajpootana, and Coorg, the people generally, with the exception of the criminal classes, were thoroughly aware that they had profited by British rule, and would be likely to lose by its subversion. The countless millions who lived by tilling the soil were for the most part ignorant of the meaning of the word loyalty: they did not in the least care what government might be in power, so long as it protected them, and did not

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* In a pamphlet entitled *An Account of the Loyal Mahometans in India* (Part II.) by Syud Ahmed Khan, the object of which is to show that no learned or respectable Mahometans took part in the Mutiny, it is stated that many of those who called themselves Moulvies in 1857 and 1858 were impostors; that Christians are the only sect upon earth with whom Mahometans may live in friendship; and that, when a Mahometan enjoys protection under the rule of a people not of his own faith, he is bound to obey them. There is a copy of the pamphlet in the Library of the India Office.

[A correspondent has sent me the following note on the above:—"Syud Ahmed Khan has certainly not given the usual Muhammadan doctrine in saying the Moslim are 'bound to obey' a Government which protects them. The chief religious and legal authority in the Muhammadan world laid it down as *farz*—*i.e.* obligatory—in Moslim to revolt *when they can*. If there is no chance of success, it is not *farz*; but even then it may be *jáiz*,—commendable."]

tax them too heavily But, though they had only the haziest notions about the British Government, yet in some parts of the country, and especially in Bengal, they had suffered so much from the cruelty and venality of the police, and of the harpies who infested the British courts of justice, that they were ill disposed towards it Incapable of understanding and allowing for the difficulties which impeded its well-meant efforts, they regarded it as responsible for the hardships which they endured

The feelings of that large and influential class who had lost their lands in consequence of British legislation have already been described There were many natives who still regarded the King of Delhi as their lawful sovereign, and others who, while admitting the *de facto* supremacy of the British Government, were not, strictly speaking, its subjects, and would at any time have followed the lead of their immediate superiors in opposing it There were numerous rajahs and petty chiefs, who, without having any substantial grievances to brood over, were always fretting against the restraints of a Government which, even though it might have treated them with forbearance and generosity, would not allow them to gratify their martial passions, and the mere existence of which was always reminding them of the humiliating fact that they belonged to a conquered people Roaming over the hills, and through the vast forests and jungles of the country, were myriads of savages, who seldom thought about the British Government, but who, if they ever heard that it was driven to bay, would be likely to think how they might fatten upon its misfortunes Again, there was another large class, the Goojurs or hereditary thieves of India, who, though they had been for fifty years restrained by the curb of a civilising power, were still straining to plunge back into the violent delights of an Ishmaelitish life. Lastly, in all the towns, as in those of the rest of the world, there were swarms of worthless vagabonds, known by the generic name of budmashes, who, like the Goojurs, detested the Government, precisely because it was a good and law-enforcing Government, and would not allow them to commit the villainies for which they were always ready

Two or three generalisations respecting the feelings of these heterogeneous masses may be safely made. First, though, unlike the English, they were not capable of fighting with harmony, resolution, and singleness of aim, against real oppres-

sion, yet, like the Irish, they were not a law-abiding people. It is true that the more thoughtful of them were ready to acknowledge that the British Government was juster, more merciful, and more efficient than any that had preceded it but still many of them secretly longed for a return of the good old times when, if there had been less peace, there had been more stir, more excitement, and a wider field for adventure, when, if there had been less security for life and property, there had been more opportunities for gratifying personal animosities, and amassing illicit gains, when, if taxation had been heavier, there had been some possibility of evading it, when, if justice had been more uncertain, there had been more room for chicanery and intrigue Finally, among all these millions there was no real loyalty towards the alien Government which had been forced to impose itself upon them, though the examples of men like Henry Lawrence, and John Nicholson, and Meadows Taylor prove that individual Englishmen who knew how to work for, to sympathise with, and, above all, to master the people committed to their charge, could win from them the truest loyalty and the most passionate devotion *

While discontent was thus seething, another class of men, more formidable than insulted talookdars or dispossessed landholders, pundits or moulvies, were brooding over their separate wrongs

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* *The Indian Rebellion*, by Dr Duff, pp 170-81, 193-4, 198, 279-80, 284-5, Meadows Taylor, pp 365-72, Cotton's *Nine Years on the North-West Frontier of India*, p 285, *Calcutta Review*, vol i pp 189-217, vol iii pp. 183-4, Raikes's *Notes on the Revolt in the North-West Provinces*, p 159 See also numerous notes scattered through the succeeding chapters.

CHAPTER II.

THE SEPOY ARMY.

Origin of the sepoy army

As the idea of founding a European Empire in India, which Clive realised, had been originated by Dupleix, so the instrument of conquest which the English wielded had been already grasped by their more quick-sighted rivals The French were the first to perceive that the most warlike of the natives were capable of learning the mysteries of European discipline, and to see what a powerful lever for effecting the conquest of India the possession of a native army so disciplined would put into European hands Still, the experiment was a dangerous one A handful of British soldiers under a leader like Clive might for a time hold a portion of India in check but who would have believed that these intruders would one day conquer the greater part of the entire continent, and hold it in subjection by the aid of a force far outnumbering their own, and severed from them by the antipathies of race and of religious bigotry? The story of the formation of the sepoy army, its achievements, and its decline will show how these antipathies were at first held in check by human sympathy and professional pride; how they were afterwards irritated by official indiscretion; and how they culminated in a death-grapple between the native and European forces which had won a hundred victories by their united prowess.

The first sepoy regiments were raised in Southern India,*

* It was at Bombay that the very first native corps were disciplined by the English *Quarterly Review*, vol. xviii., Article on the "Origin and State of the Indian Army," p 402. The writer was Sir John Malcolm.

the scene of the Company's earliest struggles. The defence of Arcot showed that, under the eyes of Europeans, they could successfully encounter native forces of far superior numbers.* With this example before him, Clive did not hesitate to raise the battalion which fought under him at Plassey, and which formed the nucleus of the Bengal army. In the constitution of the corps thus raised were contained the germs of those striking peculiarities which afterwards distinguished that army from those of the other Presidencies.† Recruited almost exclusively from the warlike population of the north-west, for the effeminate Bengalee shrank from entering its ranks, it was mainly composed of high-caste men, who were ready to face any danger, but who disdained the humbler duties of the soldier; while the regiments of Madras and Bombay, in which men of different races and castes met and fraternised, were more generally useful and more amenable to control.‡ But with this difference the three armies had certain common features. The early English rulers believed that they would secure the attachment as well as the obedience of their mercenaries by inducing natives of good family to enter their service as officers, and giving them the ample authority which their birth and habits of command fitted them to wield. The native commandant was indeed placed under the supervision of an English officer; but he was occasionally sent in command of a detachment of which European soldiers formed a part, to undertake the responsibility and to win the glory of some distant enterprise.§ Three English officers were thought sufficient for each battalion, and treated their Indian comrades with a sympathetic consideration which was repaid by respectful confidence. While English and native gentlemen were attracted

Qualities of the sepoys tested

Idiosyncrasies of Bengal sepoys

Golden Age of the sepoy army

* In the *Times* of Sept. 3, 1858, p. 7, col. 5, Dr. Russell wrote: "The general relation of the European to the native soldier is admirably expressed in a metaphor suggested, I believe, by Sir Colin Campbell himself. 'Take a bamboo and cast it against a tree, the shaft will rebound and fall harmless; tip it with steel and it becomes a spear which will pierce deep and kill.' The bamboo is the Asiatic—the steel point is the European."

† Broome's *History of the Rise and Progress of the Bengal Army*, p. 93.

‡ The oldest Madras regiments were mainly composed of Mahometans and Hindoos of high caste, but a change soon took place. *Quarterly Review*, vol. xviii. pp. 389, 397.

§ Orme, vol. i. p. 384, vol. iii. p. 495.

to the Company's service by the high pay and the honourable position of an officer, their self-respect, their mutual admiration, and their pride in their profession were increased by a succession of victories. Native officers and native privates looked up with filial reverence and love to the European who invited them to share in his triumphs, and forgot their natural aversion to the out-caste Christian when they found that he respected their caste feelings, and tolerated their religion. And, while each battalion was bound by personal devotion to its own officers, the whole army was attached by the ties of gratitude to the service of the great Company, whose salt it had eaten, and whose star it worshipped with superstitious veneration.*

The first mutinies

Feb 1764.

Sept

1766

But even in the Golden Age of the sepoy army its cordial relations with its masters were more than once broken. Seven years after the battle of Plassey, the Bengal sepoys complained with justice that they did not receive their fair share of prize-money, and five battalions showed symptoms of mutiny. Their claims were conceded; but they had been allowed to learn their own strength, and, a few months later, the oldest battalion in the service broke forth in unprovoked rebellion.† The terrible fate of the ring-leaders, who were blown away from guns in the presence of their comrades, taught the army a wholesome lesson, and two years later its loyal support enabled Clive to overawe the mutinous European officers whose discontent has been noticed in the previous chapter. But the very successes which the sepoys helped their masters to gain paved the way for their own depression. As soon as the English ventured to acknowledge to themselves the fact of their supremacy, the same self-assertion which led to the substitution of their own for native administration in Bengal, showed itself in their growing tendency to add to the number of their officers with each battalion, and to concentrate all real power in their hands. Fortunately, the command of a native battalion was

Numbers of European officers increased Powers of native officers diminished

* The article in the *Quarterly Review* already quoted contains several interesting anecdotes illustrative of the sympathy which bound together the European officers and the sepoys of the old native army, and showing what absolute devotion a real leader of men, though a European and a Christian, can win from the natives of India. See esp. pp. 399, 400.

† Broome, pp. 457–9.

still coveted; and the English officers who thus superseded the natives were picked men who knew how to maintain their authority But in 1796 a further change took place. The veteran European officers had long complained that they were passed over by younger men in the royal regiments which were from time to time sent out to reinforce the Company's army To appease their discontent, a complete reorganisation was effected Two sepoy battalions were amalgamated into one regiment, to which the same number of officers was assigned as to a regiment in the King's service, while all took rank according to the dates of their commissions The system of promotion by seniority introduced by this arrangement often threw the commands which had hitherto been always held by tried men into the hands of those who were unfit to exercise authority; while the increase in the number of European officers still further lowered the already fallen position of their native comrades Thenceforward there was nothing to stimulate the ambition of a sepoy Though he might give signs of the military genius of a Hyder, he knew that he could never attain the pay of an English subaltern,* and that the rank to which he might attain, after some thirty years of faithful service, would not protect him from the insolent dictation of an ensign fresh from England But for a few years nothing occurred to show the authors of these changes how disastrous they were to prove. Though the service had lost its charms, the sepoy continued to do his duty faithfully through the successive campaigns of Wellesley's administration, and the assault of Seringapatam, and the charge which won the battle of Assaye proved that he could fight as well as his more fortunate ancestors who had conquered under Clive It was not until the excitement of conquest, which had diverted his mind, subsided, that he began to brood over his grievances. Unfortunately, the military authorities chose this very time for disquieting him still further by the introduction of a set of vexatious regulations It was not enough for them that he had ever shown himself worthy to fight by the side of the British soldier. Believing that dress makes the man, the martinets who governed the Madras army, and who flattered them-

The reorganisation of 1796.

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* The highest pay attainable by a subahdar of infantry was 174 rupees a month Malcolm's *Pol Hist of India*, vol ii p 233. That of an ensign was 180. Stocqueler's *Handbook of India*, p 57

selves that they might safely practise their pet theories upon troops whose caste prejudices were weaker than those of the haughty Brahmins of Bengal, forbade their men to wear the marks of caste upon their foreheads, despoiled them of their cherished ear-rings; ordered them to shave off their venerated beards, issued minute instructions respecting the length of their moustaches, and compelled them to exchange their old turbans for new ones with leather cockades.* These absurd measures aroused the most dangerous suspicions of the sepoys. They fancied that they detected in the new turbans a resemblance to the hats worn by the Christians,† and the leather cockades, made of the skins of hogs or cows, were abominable to Hindoos and Mahometans alike. Hitherto they had had no cause to fear that the Christians would insult their religions. But now, with minds already depressed by a load of real if inevitable grievances, and irritated by needless innovations, they were in a mood to believe any story against their rulers. Ignorant, credulous, and excitable, the sepoys at every station in southern India gave a ready ear to the travelling fakeers and busy-bodies of every kind who told them lying tales of the intolerant proselytism of the English. The General in Ceylon, so one of these malicious fables ran, had marched his whole corps to church-parade. The head-centre of disaffection was Vellore, where the sons and daughters of Tippoo were leading the luxurious lives of state prisoners, and cherishing visions of the restoration of their humbled dynasty. They and their crowd of dependents eagerly clutched at the opportunity of turning the discontent of the sepoys to account,‡ ridiculed their Anglicised appearance, and gravely assured them that they would soon be converted to Christianity. Maddened by these taunts, the men plotted to murder their officers and the European troops in the dead of night, seize the fortress of Vellore, and hold it while their brethren at the other stations in the south of the peninsula were following their example. If the reorganisation of 1796 had not blasted the hopes of the sepoys and deadened their interest in their profession, if the new generation of English officers had treated their men with the sympathy which their predecessors had ever

1806.
Vexatious orders issued to the Madras army

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* Report of the Vellore Mutiny Commission, *Parl. Papers*, vol. xlii (1860), p. 690.
† *Ib.*
‡ *Ib.*

shown, there would have been a faithful few among the garrison to give warning of the impending danger, if indeed such a danger could then have arisen.* But, as it was, when the storm burst, the English were taken wholly by surprise. Some were shot down at their posts: others were murdered in their beds; and all must have been overpowered if there had not been a solitary officer outside the fort who heard the tumult, and hurried to Arcot for help. Fortunately Colonel Gillespie, the commandant of that station, was a man equal to any emergency. In less than a quarter of an hour after he had heard the news, he was galloping at the head of a squadron of English dragoons towards the scene of mutiny The rest of the regiment, a squadron of native cavalry, and some galloper guns soon followed. Finding the gate closed against his force, Gillespie had himself drawn up alone by a rope over the walls, assumed command of the remnant of the garrison, and kept the mutineers at bay until his men forced their way in, completed the rescue, and took terrible vengeance upon all the delinquents, except those who escaped, or who were reserved for more formal punishment. But, though the authorities, terrified by the results of their own folly, lost no time in rescinding the obnoxious regulations, the evil had not yet spent itself. At Hyderabad, at Nundydroog, and at Pallamcottah symptoms of mutiny appeared. It was not until Lord William Bentinck, who was then Governor of Madras, had issued a proclamation, assuring the army that the Government had no thought of interfering with their religion, that the sepoys began to recover their equanimity. For a long time the minds of high officials were exercised by an enquiry into the causes of the mutiny; but the Directors settled the question in a plainly-worded minute, in which, with unusual insight, they laid the blame upon the new generation of commanding officers, who had neglected to earn the confidence of their men

The mutiny at Vellore, and its results.

The lessons of the mutiny and the rebuke of the Court were not thrown away A favourable reaction set in; and, under the rule of Minto and Hastings, English colonels were still proud to command native regiments, and learned to treat their men with the paternal kindness which had won their hearts in the days

Advantages enjoyed by the sepoys.

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* See *Quarterly Review*, vol. xviii. p. 391.

of Clive. And, though the era of the sepoys' greatness had passed away, the advantages of the service were still enough to tempt men to enter it In his own family the sepoy was still a great man · he received his pay with a regularity to which the sepoys of the native states were strangers · he had a comfortable pension to look forward to, and, when he went to law, as he often did, for the natives of India are nearly as fond of litigation as their European masters, he had the right of being heard in our courts before all other suitors While he enjoyed these material advantages, his nobler feelings were aroused when he thought of the succession of victories which he had helped the great Company to gain, and proudly identified his fortunes with those of the conquering race And, when his active career was over, he had stories to tell of the great commanders under whom he had fought, which inspired his children and his fellow-villagers to follow in his footsteps The high officials who held his destiny in their hands might have attached him for ever to their service, for he was no mere mercenary soldier. But every change which they made in his condition, or in his relations with his officers, was a change for the worse And yet they were not wholly to blame, for these changes were partly the result of the growing power of the English and the introduction of English civilisation As the Company's territory expanded, there was a constantly increasing demand for able men to survey land, raise irregular regiments, or act as political officers, and, when the ambitious subaltern saw the wider field for his powers which these lucrative posts offered, it was not to be expected that he should elect to remain with his corps Thus, year by year, the best officers were seduced from their regiments by the prospect of staff employ. Conscious of inferiority, jealous of their comrades' good fortune, those who remained lost all interest in their duties, and the men soon perceived that their hearts were far from them * Moreover, the authorities began to deprive commanding officers of the powers which had once made them absolute rulers over their regiments, and which they had used with the discretion

The best officers seduced from their regiments by the prospect of staff employ

Powers of commandants diminished

* Both Sir John Malcolm and Lord Metcalfe were of opinion that from the moment when the command of a native regiment became less sought for than other employment we might date the commencement of our downfall. *Jacob's Views and Opinions, Preface, p xviii.*

of loving parents. The growing centralisation of military authority at head-quarters deprived the colonel of his power to promote, to reward, or to punish, and, when he ventured to pronounce a decision, it was as likely as not that it would be appealed against and reversed. Finally, as if to destroy the more friendly relations which, after the crisis of 1806, had sprung up again between officers and men, a General Order was issued in 1824, by which the two battalions of each regiment were formed into two separate regiments, and the officers of the original body re-distributed among its off-shoots without regard to the associations which they had contracted with their old companies

General Order of 1824.

The evil result of all these changes showed itself when the first Burmese war broke out. Even if the Bengal sepoy had had no previous cause for discontent, such a war would have been distasteful to him. He shrank from going to a foreign land of which he knew nothing, and which his imagination pictured as an abode of horrors. Moreover, other unforeseen circumstances arose, which, acting upon minds already brooding over real grievances, and now irritated by a demand for an unwelcome service, produced open insubordination. The sepoys at Barrackpore heard with dismay an exaggerated version of a disaster which the British troops already engaged in Burmah had suffered · they imagined that they foresaw the approaching doom of the Company's Raj, and, to crown all, they heard it rumoured that Government, unable to provide them with carriage, had resolved, in defiance of their caste feelings, to transport them to the seat of war by sea Believing the lying report, they refused to march. But the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Edward Paget, was an officer who required to be obeyed when he gave orders Knowing that leniency shown to mutineers is simply a weak form of cruelty, he went down to Barrackpore with a strong European force, and paraded the regiments. An attempt was made to disabuse their minds of the delusion which had fastened upon them They were then offered the alternative of consenting to march, or grounding their arms. They refused to do either. Instantly a shower of grape fell upon them; and they fled in panic, leaving a number of dead upon the ground. The surviving ringleaders were hanged; and the 47th, the regiment that had been most guilty, was disbanded, and its name erased from the Army List. The punish-

The tragedy at Barrackpore

ment so promptly dealt out struck terror into the native army; and open mutiny was postponed for many years.*

1828.

Pecuniary allowances of officers reduced.

The return of peace, however, brought fresh dangers. Writhing under the constant demands which war had made upon their Treasury, the Directors resolved to retrench, and deprived the English officers of a portion of their pecuniary allowances. A few years before, such a step would have been followed by mutiny: but these officers contented themselves with a temperate and ineffectual statement of their grievances. Their men noted the futility of their resistance, and learned to despise their already weakened authority still more.† But, as if he had feared that the sepoys might still retain some little respect for their nominal commanders, Lord William Bentinck thought fit, a few years later, to weaken the power of the latter still farther by abolishing corporal punishment. What was the fruit of his weak humanitarianism? The sepoy ceased altogether to fear his officer; and it is hard for an officer to win the love even of the honest, unless he can strike terror into the base.‡

Abolition of corporal punishment.

Bad effects of the Afghan war.

The disastrous effects of impaired discipline were aggravated by the circumstances of the Afghan war. Compelled, while in Afghanistan, to eat impure food and to drink impure water, the sepoys lost caste; and the survivors, who were obliged, on returning to India, to pay for readmission, complained that the Government had broken faith with them.§ Their imaginations too were deeply

* Kaye (*Hist. of the Sepoy War*, vol. i. pp. 268–71) condemns Paget's action. When troops, under the influence of a delusion, show symptoms of mutiny, the duty of their commander, as I understand it, is to explain to them how they are in error, to warn them that, if, after explanation given, they persist in disobedience, they will be punished, and, if they persist, to punish them. Paget did not warn the sepoys that he was prepared to fire upon them. But his conduct was approved by two high authorities, Havelock and Sydney Cotton.

† See Sir Thomas Seaton's *From Cadet to Colonel*, vol. i. pp. 85–6.

‡ "The proposed abolition," writes Seaton (*Ib.* p. 64), "was universally condemned. The native officers, who had all risen from the ranks . . . were vehemently against it. When the letter reached my commanding officer, he assembled all the most intelligent native officers, and asked their opinion on the subject. They expressed themselves very freely and strongly . . . saying 'We hope the hazoor . . . will not abolish flogging; we don't care about it, only the budmashes are flogged, if they deserve it. . . . If you abolish flogging, *the army will no longer fear*, and there will be a mutiny.'" The italics are mine.

§ MS. Correspondence.

1358

affected by the appalling calamities which had overtaken the Feringhees, and their traditional belief in the invincibility of the great Company was overthrown

Victory, however, soon returned to the British arms The Afghan war was followed by the swift conquest of Scinde, in which the sepoys earned the praise of a commander who knew, better than any man, how to gauge a soldier's qualities And, within the next five years, the native army covered itself afresh with glory in the two wars against its hereditary enemies, the formidable warriors of the Khalsa But the excitement of conquest, which flattered the sepoy's pride, and prevented him from brooding over his grievances, could not last for ever. Moreover, though he fought gallantly, the insubordination which had resulted from the weakening of his officer's powers showed itself even in the heat of campaigning William Hodson, who learned his earliest military lessons in the first Sikh war, and who was destined to prove in the great Mutiny itself that Asiatics are as susceptible as Europeans of a perfect discipline, has recorded his amazement at the disorderly conduct of the Bengal regiments with his column Again, as each new conquest lessened the chances of future war, and thus diminished the sepoy's self-importance, it imposed upon him the unwelcome duty of leaving his own country and his own relations to garrison a distant and often unhealthy land. To this inevitable trial the parsimony of his rulers added another. To encourage him to fight its battles on strange soil, the Government gave him an increase of pay. but, as soon as his valour had added the foreign country to its dominions, it rewarded him by withdrawing his allowances, and tried to justify its meanness by the ungenerous quibble that he was now once more on British territory. A succession of mutinies punished the authors of this policy, but did not convince them or their successors of its costliness Four Bengal regiments, warned for service in Scinde after its annexation, refused to march until their extra allowances were restored to them A Madras corps, which the Governor of the Madras Presidency sent to the aid of the Scinde Government, promising, on his own responsibility, that they should receive their higher pay, were told, when they reached Bombay, that the Supreme Government had refused to

Deterioration of discipline

Interference with the sepoy's pay

A succession of mutinies

1844.

confirm the promise, and revenged themselves for their disappointment by creating a disturbance on parade. Nor were the sepoys who were sent to newly-annexed territories the only sufferers from the niggardliness of the Government. A regiment of Madras cavalry, after marching northward nearly a thousand miles, to garrison a station for which the Government could spare no troops, on the faith of a promise that their services would only be needed for a time, found that they were to remain as a permanent garrison, that their pay was to be reduced to a lower rate, and that, out of this pittance, they would have to pay for the conveyance of their families from the south, and support them on their arrival. They could not defray these charges without running into debt. They could not leave their families in the south, for, unlike the Bengal regiments, they were always accompanied on their wanderings by their wives and children. What wonder then that, after loyally performing an unwelcome duty, and finding that the promises which had been made to them were to be broken, they should have resented such a cynical breach of faith by mutiny? *

1843.

Fortunately these isolated acts of insubordination did not ripen into a general revolt; but, though they were checked at the time, partly by concession, partly by the punishment of the ringleaders, no decided steps were taken to make their recurrence impossible. Nothing but a radical reform of the relations between officer and sepoy, an unmistakeable resolve to treat the latter both firmly and generously, could have healed his discontent. But the authorities were satisfied with applying a palliative when they should have wrought a cure, and they could have felt no satisfaction in punishing offenders whom their own injustice had provoked to sin.

How deeply seated was the evil, became manifest after the second Sikh war. Charles Napier had been sent out to wipe away the disgrace which our arms had suffered at Chillianwallah; but, though Gough had anticipated his triumph as a conqueror by the victory of Goojerat, he was to gain another triumph over the conquering army itself. He had only just reached Simla when he heard that two regiments at Rawul Pindee, which formed part of the army of

Sir Charles Napier's dispute with Lord Dalhousie

July, 1849

* Kaye, vol. i. pp. 276–302. See also *Calcutta Review*, vol. xli. pp. 96–7.

cupation distributed over the newly-conquered Punjaub, had fused to receive their pay unless the extra allowances were anted them. It seemed likely that other regiments would llow their example. Disregarding the advice of a member his staff, who mistook indiscriminate severity for vigour, to sband the insubordinate regiments at once, Napier sent structions to Sir Colin Campbell, who commanded at Rawul ndee, to reason quietly with the men, but at the same time hold a European force in readiness to awe them into obedi-ce if persuasion should fail Before Campbell received these ders, the immediate danger passed, for the insubordinate giments saw that it would be madness to persist in the esence of armed Europeans, and silently resolved to bide eir time But there was danger in other quarters. Proceed-g on a tour of inspection through the northern provinces, apier collected evidence which, in his judgment, proved that twenty-four regiments were only waiting for an opportunity to rise An incipient mutiny at uzeerabad was only repressed by the tact of Colonel John earsey Still Napier saw that the worst had not yet come. aking Peshawur his head-quarters, he held himself in readi-ss to swoop down upon any point at which mutiny might pear When, however, the crisis came, he was not called on to face it in person, for it was met by the faithful urage of a sepoy regiment. The 66th Native Infantry mu-nied at Govindgurh, and the 1st Native Cavalry crushed em Napier disbanded the mutinous corps, transferred its lours to a regiment of Goorkahs, and boasted that by this roke he had taught the Brahmins that, whenever they owed a sign of discontent, a more warlike people would ways be ready to supplant them. But, while he punished utiny, he pitied the mutineers, for he believed that native sloyalty was the result of British injustice, and in this irit of sympathy he directed that an old regulation, hich had granted compensation to the sepoys for dear-ss of provisions at a rate higher than that sanctioned the one then in force, should be restored, and observed itil the Governor-General, who was then absent from the seat Government, should pronounce his decision upon the case Dalhousie, however, could not forgive the man who, that he ight save an empire, had dared to act without waiting for his mmands. Denying that the State had ever been in peril,

Dec 1849.

he publicly reprimanded the Commander-in-Chief for assuming an authority that did not belong to him, and held up to the delighted natives the unedifying spectacle of disunion among their rulers.* Stung by what he regarded as the unjust and ungenerous conduct of his chief, and resolved not to be a powerless spectator of the evils which he predicted, Napier resigned his post, and spent the rest of his life in composing a solemn warning of the fatal results that would surely flow from Indian misgovernment.†

Dalhousie baulked by a native regiment

The sepoys themselves gave one more practical warning; but it was lost upon the Governor-General. In 1852 he invited the 38th Bengal Native Infantry to volunteer for service in Burmah. Regarding the

* See Papers relating to the resignation by Sir Charles Napier of the office of Commander-in-Chief in India (*Parl Papers*, vol xlvii [1854]), *Life of Sir C Napier*, vol. iv, and an article by Sir H Lawrence entitled "Sir Charles Napier's Posthumous Work" (*Calcutta Review*, vol xxii) It may be that Napier over-estimated the magnitude of the danger There is not sufficient evidence to determine the point The real question, however, as Napier himself said, was "whether the Commander in-Chief in India was justified or not justified, in using his discretion, and promptly dealing with danger in the manner which he thought most effectual for the safety of India" If, with the opinions which he held, he had shrunk from suspending the existing regulation, he would have shown a fear of responsibility unworthy of a commander-in-chief The truth is that Napier had a very low opinion of the abilities of Dalhousie, and personally disliked him On the other hand, Dalhousie, like many men who are themselves fearless of assuming responsibility, was very chary of allowing his subordinates to do so He seems to have been haunted by a constant suspicion that the fiery old general did not regard him with due respect, and it is probable that he was not sorry to find an occasion for getting rid of him The two men were not meant to work together.

† It has often been said that Napier never wrote anything that could be fairly interpreted as a warning against or a prophecy of a sepoy mutiny But I find these words among his published writings —"he (the sepoy) is devoted to us as yet, but we take no pains to preserve his attachment *It is no concern of mine, I shall be dead before what I foresee will take place, but it will take place*" Again, "high caste,—that is to say *mutiny*—is encouraged" *Times*, July 24, 1857, p 5, col. 1, and Aug 17, p 9, col 4 The italics are mine. See also p 89, note † *infra*. It is quite true that he often spoke in high terms of the discipline of the native troops But, in the first place, he expressly excepted the Bengal army from this praise (See *Times*, July 24, 1857) And, in the second place, the fact that he bestowed the praise is quite consistent with his having foreseen that the objects of it would sooner or later mutiny As far as I can see, all that he meant to say was that the sepoys were by nature far more tractable than British soldiers. He foresaw that, if they were encouraged by continued relaxation of discipline to mutiny, and thought that it would be their interest to do so, they would, being human, yield to the temptation

invitation as an encroachment upon their rights, for the Bengal sepoy enlisted on the understanding that he should not be required to cross the sea, the men flatly refused to march.

Dalhousie and the multitude of counsellors.

Besides the proofs of the rottenness of our military system which occasional mutinies had supplied, there had been no lack of warnings from men whose experience gave them a right to speak. Thomas Munro and John Malcolm had earnestly insisted upon the necessity of attaching the sepoy to the service by making the prizes which it held out to his ambition more valuable, and Charles Napier had added his testimony to theirs as to the fatal results which would ensue from so lowering the position of the English commandant as to deter all able officers from aspiring to it.* But Dalhousie's predecessors, or the authorities who had chosen them, had neglected to profit by these warnings, and, when he assumed office, he was [illegible] bewildered by the conflicting opinions which a multitude[illegible] counsellors thrust upon him, that he resolved, perhaps in d[illegible]pair, perhaps in easy confidence to leave the system as he f[illegible]d it.

Radi[illegible]ects of the[illegible] army.

S[illegible] though it was hard to choose between the opposite theories on the effects of giving preference to high-caste candidates for enlistment, of mixing men of different races in the same regiment, of promoting by seniority, and of adding to the num[illegible] of European officers with each regiment, there were cert[illegible] undeniable facts which might have shown Dalhousie that[illegible] opinions of the opponents of the Bengal system were sou[illegible] than the equally plausible opinions of its supporters It [illegible] a man of genius to reconstruct a long-established sys[illegible] and push aside the dead weight of prejudice which def[illegible] it. But, though Dalhousie is not to be blamed for hav[illegible]cked the force to achieve so great a task, his acquiesc[illegible]n the defects of the existing system is inexcusable. It was[illegible]sible to explain away the fact that in Bengal, where a [illegible]e subahdar † might often be seen off parade crouching [illegible]ject submission before the Brahmin recruit whom he

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* [illegible] officers who were aware of the laxity of discipline in sepoy reg[illegible]were afraid to speak out. See Russell's *Diary in India*, vol p [illegible]

† [illegible] captain.

was supposed to command, the predominance of high-caste men, or, at least, the deference that was yielded to their caste prejudices, was fatal to discipline It was certainly true that native opinion in the Bombay and Madras Presidencies allowed a high-caste sepoy to perform duties which would have shocked Brahminical prejudice in Bengal, just as, to choose a familiar illustration, nine English protestants out of ten no longer find themselves troubled by scruples about the observance of the Sabbath when they go abroad. But this consideration ought not to have led the Government to truckle to caste prejudices, but rather to reject all recruits who allowed those prejudices to interfere with their military duties, and to enlist in their stead the thousands of better men who would have been only too glad to take their places * Had this been done, the Brahmin's self-interest would have soon got the better of his prejudices, for, even in Bengal, he kept his caste in the background when his officer dared to show that he pitied it, and only obtruded it because he found that he could generally use it as an instrument for the coercion of his commanders.† Again, though Dalhousie may well have been perplexed when Napier insisted that the Bengal system of promotion by seniority kept the army contented by holding out to every man a sure prospect of ultimate advancement, while John Jacob asserted with equal truth that the sepoys who became officers under that system were worn-out imbeciles unfit for command, yet the fact that in the Bombay army, where promotion went by merit, the native officers were the bulwarks of discipline, might have been accepted as a proof of the inferiority of the Bengal system. Finally, Dalhousie should have remembered that not Jacob only, but some of the ablest officers of the Bengal army itself had lifted up their voices against the system under which they had been brought up It was a fact, and one of which many of those officers were uneasily conscious, that for thirty years past the Bengal army had been in a state of quasi-mutiny, and that several actual mutinies, besides those

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* See letters from Lewis Pelly and John Jacob to the *Times*, Jan. 19, 1858, p 7, col 2, and Jan. 23, p 7, col 5

† "It is a mistake to suppose them (the Madras sepoys) free from caste prejudices There are plenty of these, but they have not been given in to" *Calcutta Review*, vol xxxiii, Article—"The Madras Native Army," p 134. See also p 145

which were too flagrant to be concealed, had been hushed up by the authorities at head-quarters *

The disputed points that have just been noticed were, however, of small importance compared with one vital question, on the answer to which depended the loyalty of the sepoy army and the stability of the Indian empire. Were commanding officers to be once more entrusted with that rightful authority of which the jealousy or the red-tapeism of head-quarters had robbed them? This question was absolutely neglected. The sepoy was taught to regard, not his colonel, but the head of the army as his commanding officer, and the head of the army was to him no more than a dim idea Knowing the impotence of his officers, he amused himself by bringing frivolous complaints against them at every half-yearly inspection Yet the men who did this were as capable of reverencing authority as the veteran who salaamed the picture of Eyre Coote, his dead commander Much has been written about the sepoy's impulsiveness, his credulity in accepting a delusion, his childish obstinacy in clinging to it. But, though these qualities did belong to him, they would never of themselves have led him to rebel. He was by nature less insubordinate than the British soldier. Napier could see nothing to fear in him so long as he was properly dealt with For, with all his faults, he had the quality, which is inborn in all men, of respecting authority when exercised by a strong and just superior. He entered our army with no idea of claiming any rights for himself But, when he found that his colonel, whom he was ready to obey as his absolute king, and to reverence as his father, was powerless to punish or reward him, when he listened to the Articles of War, which seemed to imply that his officers expected him to disobey them, a new light flashed across his mind † It was only necessary to rule him according to his genius, to teach him that he must obey unhesitatingly, and that he would in return be treated generously, and he would have been a loyal soldier for life It was not the inconsistency of their character that drove the same sepoys who had risked their lives on the field of battle to protect their officers, and had watched by their bedsides when

The vital question

* *Overland Bombay Times*, 1857, p 184 *Times*, July 19, 1857

† See Jacob, pp 1-3, 108-12, 121, 125, 221, 426-8 Also Malcolm's *Pol. Hist of India*, vol. ii. pp 225-45

they were wounded, to murder them when the Mutiny bro out it was the inconsistency with which they were treated

It is, however, possible that, even if all the reforms in det which had been suggested had been carried ou the spirit of mutiny might not have been whol overcome, unless the disproportion that exist between the numbers of the Native and th European troops had been remedied It may l said that for this disproportion the Cabinets, the Boards c Control, the Courts of Directors, the Governors-General, th Anglo-Indian officers, and the English people of three genera tions were jointly responsible * At the close of Dalhousie administration the Native troops amounted to two hundre and thirty-three thousand men, while, to watch this gigant army, there were only forty-five thousand three hundred an twenty-two European soldiers of all arms † Moreover the latt were located on such false principles that their controllin power was seriously impaired ‡ Yet there had never been time when that power was more needed. It cannot be to emphatically stated that the natives of India, with the excep tion of a very few men of rare powers of reflection, or rai opportunities of acquiring information, had not the least ide of the real resources of England They drew their conclusion merely from what they saw. Incredible as it may appear, was a common belief among them that the population of th British isles was not much more than a hundred thousan souls § As if to confirm them in this delusion, the Hom Government had recently withdrawn two regiments from Indi to strengthen the army in the Crimea It is not to be wondere at that soon afterwards it began to be rumoured in the bazaai and the sepoy lines that Russia had conquered and annexe England

Disproportion between the numbers of European and native troops

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* See Temple, p 115

† Duke of Argyll's *India under Dalhousie and Canning*, pp. 51, 6. Immediately before the Mutiny the native troops amounted to 232,224, th Europeans to 45,522—6,170 officers and 39,352 non-commissioned officers an men These figures, however, do not give a fair idea of the weakness of th European troops "In Bombay," writes Montgomery Martin on the authori of *Parl Papers*, "the relative strength of European to Native Infantry wa as 1 to 9¾, in Madras, as 1 to 16¾, and in Bengal, as 1 to 24½." *The India Empire*, vol ii p 125

‡ Argyll, p 62

§ See Trevelyan's *Cawnpore*, p. 27

Dalhousie devoted much anxious consideration to the question of increasing the numbers of the European troops, and improving their distribution, and stated his arguments and conclusions with his usual clearness and emphasis in a series of minutes, which he ordered to be transmitted to the Directors He pointed out that the Crimean war had given birth to monstrous rumours injurious to our prestige he dwelt upon the fa[illegible] that, notwithstanding the vast increase of our territories b[illegible]e conquests and annexations of his administration, there h[illegible] been hardly any corresponding increase in our military st[illegible]gth, and he insisted on the necessity of maintaining an e[illegible]ive and constant control over the immense alien popula-ti[illegible]f our Indian possessions, and of guarding against possi-bl[illegible]acks from the ambitious princes* who dwelt outside our fr[illegible]r But it is a curious fact that there is no evidence to sh[illegible]hat he had the faintest suspicion of the far more serious d[illegible] to which the European troops were exposed from their n[illegible] auxiliaries This fact, however, does not affect the value o[illegible] practical suggestions which he offered. He proposed to re[illegible] the number of sepoys in each regiment to eight hun-d[illegible]en, to raise the strength of the European infantry from th[illegible]ne† to thirty-five battalions, and to increase the num-be[illegible] the European companies of artillery ‡ But these sug-ge[illegible] were not adopted,§ and the sepoys, inflated by a sense o[illegible] own importance, naturally looked forward to a time w[illegible]ey might use their strength to overturn the Govern-m[illegible]nd establish their own supremacy ||

Reforms urged by Dalhousie.

[illegible] rulers of Afghanistan, Nepaul, and Burmah

[illegible] nominal strength at the time was thirty-three Two, however, had b[illegible]orarily withdrawn for service in Europe

[illegible]. Jackson, pp 161, 164–5 Dalhousie's Minutes of Sept. 13, 1[illegible] Feb 5, 1856, printed in 1858 by order of the House of Commons o[illegible]sittart's motion

[illegible] Feb 3, 1858, they had not even been brought under the notice of th[illegible]rs

[illegible] the opinion of Sir R Temple, and was that of Lord Lawrence [illegible] 115 Sir Sydney Cotton mentions in his book, *Nine Years on the [illegible]tern Frontier of India*, p 157, that, many months before the [illegible] native servants wished to leave him on the ground that "there w[illegible] to be a general rising in the country, in which the sepoy army [illegible]ke the lead." See also Evidence taken before the Court ap-[illegible]r the Trial of the King of Delhi, p. 157, *Parl. Papers*, vol. xviii.

The native army on the eve of Lord Canning's arrival

On the eve of Lord Canning's arrival, the native army was a heterogeneous body, as in race, caste, and religion, so also in quality. There were a few superb irregular regiments, commanded by a handful of picked European officers There were the useful troops of Bombay and Madras There was the Bengal army composed of stalwart men of martial aspect, who had been perhaps better endowed by nature with soldierly qualities than the men of the other Presidencies, but who had, under a corrupt system, been suffered to become a dangerous mob It was no wonder that these regiments, in which the sentries relieved each other when and how they pleased, in which it was an everyday occurrence for hundreds of men to quit their ranks without leave, and scour the country in quest of plunder,* were ripe for mutiny The marvel is that they had so long preserved the semblance of an army. Yet so great is the force of habit that, while the ablest men in India kept repeating the solemn warning that it was in the force on which the safety of the empire depended that its greatest danger lay,† the Bengal officers regarded the insubordination which they could not wholly ignore as inseparable from the constitution of a native army They were deaf to the rumbling of the volcano, for they did not know that it lay beneath them until its eruption startled them out of their fatal slumber.

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* Jacob, pp 115-17 See App L
† Jacob, p 229.

CHAPTER III.

[illegible] YEAR OF LORD CANNING'S RULE—OUTBREAK OF THE MUTINY.

[illegible] of Dal[illegible] his cha[illegible]nd pla[illegible]g An[illegible]an rul[illegible]

On [illegible] 29th of February, 1856, Lord Dalhousie resigned the Government of India As he drove down the banks of the Hooghly towards the vessel on which he was to embark, the multitudes who had assembled to witness his departure, lifted up their voices, and cheered him loudly and long * Th[illegible] he was not above the middle height, and his frame w[illegible]ciated by disease, yet there was such majesty in his be[illegible], such command in his features, such a fire in the gl[illegible] of his eyes, that he looked every inch a king † And it wa[illegible]h the loyalty due to a king of men that those enthusia[illegible] onlookers regarded him For, if he lacked that sympa[illegible]c knowledge of men's hearts, that charm of manner, that op[illegible]nthusiasm which had made the despotism of Hastings an[illegible] Wellesley so attractive, if, in spite of his genuine consi[illegible]tion for his subordinates, he had been regarded by them ra[illegible] with awe than with affection, yet, not more by his succe[illegible]an by the devotion with which he had given the flower o[illegible] manhood to the service of the State, he had conquered th[illegible]eart-felt respect and admiration of all men He had se[illegible] India so well that he had no strength left for further s[illegible] in the field of statesmanship, and now, while still a y[illegible] man, he was going home to England to die But the w[illegible] which he had already done had been such as to entitle h[illegible] to rank with Wellesley and Hastings, although below

* [illegible]verland Bombay Times, 1857, p 42, Calcutta Review, vol. xxxiii. p 397

† [illegible]emple, p 124

them, in the first class of Governors-General Below them because, whatever his powers may have been, he had never been brought face to face with political trials as crucial as those which had assayed and proved the metal of their statesmanship With them because, believing that his countrymen had no right to be in India unless they were there as the apostles of Western civilisation, believing with an enthusiastic faith that the introduction of such civilisation would galvanise the whole organism of Indian society, and make its healthy growth possible, he set a-going at the highest pressure all the machinery that could contribute to the attainment of his object

His successor was a man of a different stamp Not only in India, but in England also the appointment of Lord Canning caused more wonder than satisfaction An elegant scholar, a warm-hearted, generous man, shy and reserved, but a true friend to those who loved him, he had had much experience of affairs, and had proved himself a creditable administrator but he had needed persuasion to enter public life at all, and, though he had never shirked its duties, he had never pressed forward to undertake its responsibilities, or to win its prizes Lord Ellenborough had offered to take him to India as his private secretary but he had preferred the chances of office at home, and thus lost the opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of Indian affairs under a clever statesman When he was chosen to succeed Dalhousie, he was holding the office of Postmaster-General, and the conscientious assiduity with which he had mastered the unattractive details of his work had won for him a seat in the Cabinet. But the high place to which he was now called needed greater qualities It is hardly necessary to say that he approached his work with a deep sense of its importance indeed, he had a presentiment that his tenure of office would be marked by some great crisis, to combat which his faculties would be strained to the utmost "We must not forget," he said, at a banquet given by the East India Company a few months before his departure, "that in the sky of India, serene as it is, a small cloud may arise, at first no bigger than a man's hand, but which, growing larger and larger, may at last threaten to burst and overwhelm us with ruin."* But with all his high sense of responsibility he had one grave defect as a ruler His conscientiousness was apt to

Lord Canning

* Kaye, vol i p 378

degenerate into scrupulousness He never could bring himself to pronounce a judgment even upon the most urgent questions, until he had investigated every tittle of evidence Such a habit of mind is an admirable one in itself but it is one which a statesman must learn to hold in restraint This Canning never learned to do When he should have struck the guilty, he wasted precious moments in taking elaborate precautions against striking the innocent * He was not a weak man, he knew how to confront danger calmly, but he had not the insight that could at once discern its form and gauge its dimensions, the self-reliance that could overrule the counsellors who underrated it, the force that could master it

The Supreme Council

It would have been fortunate for the new Governor-General if his advisers had been practical statesmen like Outram, or Edwardes, or Nicholson The judgment of these men had been ripened, and their political courage brought to the finest temper by hard, dangerous work among the people of the country they had firmly grasped the principle that no amount of kindness could win either the affection or the respect of those people, unless it were supported by a masterful will But the members of the Supreme Council were men of a softer fibre. Only one of them, General Low, had an adequate knowledge of the natives, and he had long passed his prime The others were John Dorin, John Peter Grant, Barnes Peacock, and George Anson, the Commander-in-Chief The last-named will be spoken of hereafter Grant was unquestionably a very able man His recorded minutes show that his judgment was thoroughly in-

* I find this passage in Russell's *Diary* —"In this and subsequent conversations that night on the subject of the mutinies the Governor-General evinced a remarkable analytical power, an ability of investigation, a habit of appreciating and weighing evidence, a spirit of justice and moderation, and a judicial turn of mind which made a deep impression upon me His opinions once formed seemed 'inebranlables', and his mode of investigation, abhorrent from all intuitive impulses, and *dreading above all things quick decision*, is to pursue the forms of the strictest analysis, to pick up every little thorn on the path, to weigh it, to consider it, and then to cast it aside, or to pile it up with its fellows, to go from stone to stone, strike them and sound them, and at last on the highest point of the road to fix a sort of granite pedestal, declaring that the height is so and so, and the view is so and so—so firm and strong that all the storm and tempest of the world may beat against it and find it immovable But man's life is not equal to the execution of many tasks like these" Vol i. p 116. The italics are mine See also Temple, p 182

dependent, and that he had the courage of his convictions. But his training had not been such as to foster a healthy development of his powers He was a clever bureaucrat, not a statesman. It is unnecessary to attempt to analyse the characters of the other two It is enough to say that they, as well as Grant, had either failed to notice the symptoms that indicated the existence of a mutinous spirit in the Bengal army, or did not realise what appalling consequences must follow, if that spirit were not instantly and sternly crushed as soon as it should manifest itself in overt acts

Affairs of Oude

Canning had hardly entered upon his duties before his troubles began Outram was anxious to return to England, to recruit his shattered health, and, wishing to leave his work in good hands, urged Canning to appoint Henry Ricketts, an able Bengal civilian, as his successor Canning would have acted upon this advice, but the Board of Control interposed Ricketts was preparing a report upon the most effectual mode of diminishing the salaries of the Company's servants It was the old story. Imperial considerations were set at nought then, as in the days of Wellesley, whenever they imperilled the chance of some sordid and petty gain Men fit to rule a province were not so plentiful that they should have been forced to waste their energies in pettifogging calculations But the folly of the home authorities might have been harmless, if an unfortunate accident had not deprived Oude for a time of a yet abler master than Ricketts would have been Henry Lawrence, whose chivalrous heart yearned to protect the people of the newly annexed province from the unsympathetic rule of the modern civilian, and to smooth the way for their transition from barbarous usage to civilised law, offered to serve in Outram's place but, before his letter reached the Governor-General, Coverley Jackson, a smart revenue officer from the North-Western Provinces, had been appointed officiating Chief Commissioner of Oude No more unfortunate selection could have been made Jackson was best known for the violence of his temper, but Canning thought that this defect ought not to be allowed to weigh against his undoubted abilities, and imagined that he could cure it by a gentle warning Only a man of the greatest tact and firmness could have reconciled the classes who had thriven under the corrupt native government to the rigorous purity of British rule but Jackson had no tact, and his firmness showed

self chiefly in a series of contentions, which he kept up during the whole of his administration with the Financial Commissioner, Martin Gubbins, a man whose injudicious self-assertion was as great as his own.* Rather than bate a jot of their miserable pretensions, this pair of officials spent the time which they should have devoted to the public service in undignified wrangling. Canning contented himself with exhorting them to be at peace, and only superseded Jackson when his pertinacity had outraged all patience, and when it seemed too late even for Lawrence to repair the mischief which he had done. For the deposed King of Oude was complaining bitterly of the unmanly cruelty with which the English were treating his family, even the delicate ladies of his zenana; and, if these complaints were unfounded,† there were others, proceeding from the people, which, though in many cases unreasonable, were natural enough. The talookdars were being summarily deprived of every foot of land to which they could not establish a legal title;‡ and, although in all but a very few instances the settlement officers examined their claims with scrupulous fairness, they nevertheless bitterly resented the decisions which compelled them to surrender those villages which they had acquired by fraud or violence. Moreover they writhed under the yoke of a civilising government, which cut away their arbitrary powers, and would not permit them to tyrannise, as they had formerly done, over their weaker neighbours. The village communities indeed gained by the settlement: but it is not likely that they felt any real gratitude towards the British Government; for they were wholly incapable of appreciating the

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* In fairness to Jackson it ought to be mentioned that he repeatedly warned Government, but in vain, that plots and conspiracies were rife in Oude. Col. Ramsay's *Recollections of Military Service and Society*, vol. i. p. 183.

† *Parl. Papers*, vol. xlvi. p. 416, par. 7. The King's complaints about the treatment of his family were "very greatly exaggerated. . . . But there was a true foundation for the complaint, in the fact that . . . C. Jackson had taken possession of . . . one of the palaces set apart for the royal family."

‡ The extent to which the talookdars suffered has, however, been greatly exaggerated by Kaye (vol. iii. p. 422), and other writers. As a matter of fact, "out of 23,543 villages included in taluqas at the close of native rule, 13,640, paying a revenue of Rs. 35,06,519 were settled with talookdars in 1856, while 9,903 villages, paying Rs. 32,08,319 were settled with persons other than talookdars." Irwin, p. 180; *Parl. Papers*, vol. xlvi. (1861), p. 489, par. 7.

benevolent motives by which it was actuated.* The numerou dependents of the late court, the traders who had ministered t its luxury, were suddenly thrown out of employment † the dis bandment of the King's army had thrown a vast horde o desperadoes upon the world with but scanty means of subsis tence ‡ the imposition of a heavy tax upon opium had inflamec the discontent of the poorer population, who languished with out the drug which they could no longer afford to buy, while men with whom lawlessness was a tradition, suddenly found themselves judged by tribunals which aimed at dispensing equal justice to high and low, but which allowed no circum stances to weigh in mitigation of their sentences, and, in civil cases, exasperated plaintiff and defendant alike by an inflexible adherence to forms and precepts of which they knew nothing § It was thus that the advice of Sleeman and Henry Lawrence to assume the administration of Oude in the interests of its inhabitants had been followed However judiciously carried out, the change of government, imperatively demanded though it was by every principle of right, must have given sore offence to the most influential classes of the population, but, carried out as it was, it gave offence to many who might easily have been conciliated

Such were the perils which Henry Lawrence was called upon

* ' I remember," says Irwin, " on one occasion discussing the subject of the annexation with a well-to do zemindar, a man perfectly well affected towards British rule 'Why, he asked, had the Sircar deposed Nawab Wajid Ali? He was a poor weak creature, a humble servant of the British Government. What had he done to be so summarily wiped out?' And it appeared to be quite a new light to him to be told that the misrule of Oude had become more than the British Government would tolerate If this is the point of view of one who was a severe sufferer by the ex King's administration, and who gained immensely by its subversion, it is to be feared that the judgment of those who suffered and gained loss will hardly be more favourable" Pp 174-5

† ' On the whole a very fair share of patronage was reserved for the native officials below the rank of nazim, or independent local authority, but their habits were utterly unfitted for our service Arduous and responsible labours were imposed on the officers, and they were compelled to choose the fittest instruments to aid in them None got pensions, but those who were not public servants had no claim to any" *Parl Papers*, vol xlvi. p 411, par 13

‡ Canning asserted that the disbanded troops had been liberally treated, and had, with few exceptions, independent means of subsistence as cultivators *Ib* p 418, par 12 The fact, however, remains that they lost heavily by the annexation

§ Hutchinson's *Narrative of the Mutinies in Oude*, p 27

to ...ont when Canning asked him to undertake the administration of Oude In the interval between his appointment and his arrival at Lucknow, a still more formidable danger arose A Moulvie, who had for some time past been travelling from city to ..., and preaching a holy war against the infidels, appeared in Fyzabad, and began to sow sedition in the minds of the people * He was seized and im... ...ed but the English, never dreaming that their power ...be shaken, were too unsuspicious to appreciate his power f... ...chief, and it was not until some months afterwards that h... recognised as the chief of a host of conspirators who h... ...rred up their co-religionists to rebel against British rule ...y in the preceding year the politics of Central Asia had begun to engage the Governor-General's attention So far back as 1853, the British Ambassador at Teheran had been obliged to interfere f... protection of Herat against a Persian army which had b... ...ent to reduce it But, though the Shah had agreed to d... from his enterprise, it was known that he secretly re... British interference, and the Indian Government ...sly awaited the inevitable rupture Underrating the ... success in the Crimea, the Persians resolved to rid them... of an alliance from which they expected no advantage, and, by a succession of insults, drove the British Ambassador to leave their capital Meanwhile a ... had arisen against the ruler of Herat, which the Shah perhaps instigated, and certainly resolved to turn to ...nt Falsely asserting that the Ameer, Dost Mahomed, ...ent upon the annexation of that city, he pretended that ...uty of self-preservation compelled him to anticipate his ... and equipped a fresh army, in violation of the promise ... he had given to the British Ambassador Canning was ...ling to send another force into the dreaded regions beyond ...orth-west frontier · but the Home Government decreed ...he Shah's perfidy must be punished, and ordered an ex... ...on to be despatched to the Persian Gulf The Bombay ...rnment, which provided the bulk of the troops, was ...ed to nominate their commander, and sent General Stalker ... head of the first expeditionary force But, when Outram

* Hutchinson's *Narrative of the Mutinies in Oude*, p 35

heard that there was to be war, his enfeebled energies were re-invigorated by the thought that there was work for him to do, and, undertaking to perform both the political and the military duties of the expedition, he sailed towards the end of 1856 for Bombay.

It is needless to detail the operations which he so successfully superintended, for the Persian war only affected the course of the Mutiny by affording an opportunity for securing the friendship of Dost Mahomed, the inveterate enemy of Persia.

Treaties with Dost Mahomed.

In order to make it clear how this opportunity had arisen, and how it was used, it will be necessary to review the relations that had subsisted for some years previously between the British Government and Dost Mahomed. In 1853 Colonel Mackeson, the Commissioner of Peshawur, was assassinated. It was conjectured that the assassin had been instigated by a fanatical mollah* of Cabul, and the conjecture was supported by the fact that the bitter feelings created by the policy of Auckland in the hearts of the Afghans were still alive. No one understood those feelings better, or deplored them more than the officer who was appointed as Mackeson's successor, Herbert Edwardes, the hero of Mooltan. Resolving to heal them, and seeing that he could only do so by effecting a radical change in the British policy towards Afghanistan, he wrote to Dalhousie, asking for permission to negotiate a treaty with Dost Mahomed, on the principle that bygones should be bygones. Dalhousie, in reply, gave him full liberty to act as he might think best, remarking that such a treaty, though difficult of attainment, was most desirable. But John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Punjaub, thought differently. Again and again he told Edwardes that Dost Mahomed would never agree to a treaty, and would not observe it if he did, and exerted all his influence to convince Dalhousie of the futility of the idea. Dalhousie, however, was not to be seduced from his opinion,†

* Priest.

† Dalhousie wrote demi-officially to Edwardes, asking him to correspond with him directly, not through the medium of the Punjaub Government. The request was perfectly natural, for, owing to the geographical position of Peshawur, the Commissioner of that Division ranked higher than Commissioners in general. He was, in fact, practically the Governor-General's Agent on the Frontier. Edwardes, however, from a feeling of delicacy towards his immediate superior, persuaded Dalhousie to allow him to continue forwarding his correspondence through Lahore.

and the tact and transparent sincerity of Edwardes completely won the confidence of Dost Mahomed When all the preliminaries had been arranged, Edwardes received a letter from Dalhousie, written in terms of the most cordial approval, and empowering him, inasmuch as he had alone conceived and worked out the idea of the treaty, to act as the sole signatory But Edwardes was one of those rare characters to whom the public good is dearer than the gratification of personal ambition. He wrote to Dalhousie in reply, urging that the stability of the treaty would be increased if the highest authority in the Punjaub were to affix his signature to it Dalhousie recognised the wisdom of this advice,* and in March, 1855, John Lawrence on the one side, and Hyder Ali Khan, the eldest son of Dost Mahomed, on the other, signed a treaty which bound the Afghans to be friends of our friends and enemies of our enemies † When the Persian war broke out, Edwardes saw that a further development of his policy was required On the ground that he had cleared he desired to erect a bulwark which should defend the British and the Afghans against the assaults of their common enemies He therefore urged Canning to secure the friendship of Dost Mahomed by granting him substantial aid against the Persians Lawrence again opposed the suggestion of his lieutenant ‡ but it was impossible to overlook the importance of making use of the Ameer's enmity to Persia, and accordingly Canning, though, remembering the events of 1841, he would not send a British force to co-operate with the Afghans, declared himself ready to subsidise any Afghan force which should march against the Shah. The Ameer was invited to a conference, and in January, 1857, he met Lawrence and Edwardes at the entrance of the Khyber Pass, and discussed with them the terms of a treaty which both parties equally desired After repeated communications with the Calcutta Government, it was agreed that the British should

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* "I am exceedingly vexed," wrote Dalhousie to Edwardes (Jan 30, 1855), "that you should not have had, as I intended you should, the crowning credit of bringing to a close the negociations you have conducted so well and so successfully to their present point" Lawrence himself wrote to Edwardes, "I so far agree with the Governor-General that I think *all the merit of the affair, whatever it may be, is yours*" The italics are mine

† Aitchison's *Treaties, Engagements, and Sunnuds*, vol ii pp 430-1

‡ Lawrence afterwards admitted that, "as matters had turned out in Hindostan, the late arrangements with the Ameer were very fortunate *Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, 23 July, 1858, p 151

furnish the Ameer with four thousand stand of arms, and a subsidy of a lac of rupees a month, and that, in return, the Ameer should maintain an army of eighteen thousand men to act against Persia, and allow a British Mission to enter his country, to watch over the expenditure of the subsidy.* "I have made an alliance," said Dost Mahomed, "with the British Government, and, come what may, I will keep it till death."

A later chapter of this history will show how triumphantly the policy that had led to the conclusion of this treaty was vindicated. The credit of that policy belonged, of right, to Herbert Edwardes alone. But years passed away, and the act to which he looked back with just pride as the most valuable service that he had been permitted to render to his country was not declared to be his. John Lawrence had then the opportunity of making a noble return for the self-abnegation which his lieutenant had practised towards him. It was for him to place the facts in their true light, and, standing boldly forward, to point to the man who would not utter a word to exalt himself at the cost of another, and to say, "Honour to him to whom honour is due." Had he done so, he might indeed have lost some portion of his reputation for statesmanship; but he would have earned a glory as pure and imperishable as that which illuminates the self-sacrifice of Outram. But he preferred to claim for himself the credit of a policy which he had not only not originated, but had persistently opposed, and history, while acknowledging that part of his fame was indeed honestly won, is forced to expose the rottenness of the foundation upon which the other part was based.†

Before the conclusion of the second treaty, a measure had

* Aitchison, vol. ii. pp. 431–3.

† "It is hardly necessary to say," writes Mr. Bosworth Smith (*Life of Lord Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 462) "that, in his communications with the Governor-General, John Lawrence dwelt with special emphasis on Edwardes's services in connection with the treaty." It is all the more necessary, then, to say, as I have said, that, in his communications with the public, he did not dwell upon them at all. After Edwardes's death, some of his friends determined to erect a tablet to his memory in the chapel of King's College, London. An inscription, which was to be placed on the tablet, was submitted to Lawrence for perusal. It contained the statement that Edwardes had made the treaties. Replying to the gentleman who had sent it to him, Lawrence asserted that he, not Edwardes, had made them. In an *official* sense, he undoubtedly spoke the truth. But one would like to know whether, at the time when he wrote this reply, it occurred to him that he had formerly written to Edwardes,—"I think *all the merit of the affair, whatever it may be, is yours.*"

General Service Enlistment Act

been passed which filled up the sum of the sepoy's purely professional grievances, and made him still more disposed to cast about for others Of the six Bengal regiments that were alone liable for general service, three were in 1856 doing duty in Pegu, and two of these were entitled to be relieved within a few months None of the other three was available for their relief But, although it was thus impossible to send a single Bengal regiment by sea to the Burmese coast, there would have been no breach of faith towards the army in sending the required number by land Unfortunately, however, a part of the road was impassable, and the difficulty of clearing it in time presented an almost insuperable obstacle to the use of the overland route Canning, in his perplexity, bethought him of the Madras army, which was enlisted for general service but the Southern Presidency was naturally unwilling to rouse discontent among its own troops by calling upon them to furnish a permanent garrison to a country which lay properly within the sphere of the Bengal army. Nothing but a radical reform could help the Governor-General out of his difficulty Exasperated at the absurdity of the prejudices that had involved him in it, and had been the source of constantly increasing trouble to the State, he resolved that thenceforth he would be the master of his own army, and on the 25th of July issued a General Order which decreed that no recruit should for the future be accepted who would not undertake to march whithersoever his services might be required "There is no fear," he wrote a few months later, "of feelings of caste being excited by the new enlistment regulations in the Bengal army" He deceived himself, for, while he was writing, recruiting officers were complaining that high-caste men had begun to shrink from entering the service, which their brethren had once needed no persuasion to join, and old sepoys were whispering to each other their fears that the oaths of the new recruits were binding upon themselves also About the same time that the General Service Enlistment Act had been passed, an ill-judged parsimony had dictated another measure, namely that sepoys declared unfit for foreign service should no longer be allowed to retire on invalid pensions, but be utilised for the performance of cantonment duty,* and

Nov 8

Grievances of the sepoys

* Gubbins's *Mutinies in Oudh*, pp 94-5

shortly before, it had been decreed that all sepoys without exception should thenceforth pay the regular postage for their letters instead of sending them under the frank of their commandant.* These apparently trifling changes seriously added to the existing irritation. The sepoys were now in a mood to believe any lie that reflected discredit upon the Government. Seeing that the warlike Sikhs were favoured by the recruiting sergeant, they persuaded themselves that an entire Sikh army of thirty thousand men was to be raised to supersede them.

Rumoured designs of Government against caste and religion

They listened to the suggestions of clever agitators, who assured them that the Queen had herself sent out Lord Canning for the express purpose of converting them, and that the General Service Enlistment Act was only the first step in his career of persecution. They saw in the rumoured support of missionary societies by Lord Canning, in the rumoured zeal of Lady Canning for the conversion of native women, evidences of the same spirit of proselytism. As a matter of fact, neither the Governor-General nor his wife had done more than those who had gone before them. But it was not unnatural that they should be suspected of having done so. For, little more than a year before, the missionaries had published a manifesto which went to prove that the railways and steamships of the European, by facilitating the material union of all races of men, were to be the indirect instruments for accomplishing their spiritual union under one faith. Regarded as a plain invitation by Government to join the Christian religion, this paper caused great excitement amongst the natives of Bengal, and William Tayler,

* I do not feel certain of the correctness of the statement in the text as to the irritation caused by the postal regulation. It is true that under the old system the sepoys had been allowed to send their letters free, but they had been obliged to pay a shilling for those they received. Under the new system, introduced by Dalhousie, a uniform single rate of postage of half an anna (¾d.) was established for letters carried within the limits of India. Dalhousie's Farewell Minute, p. 18, par. 72 (*Parl. Papers*, vol. xlv., 1856), *A Few Remarks anent the Red Pamphlet*, p. 13. Sir H. Lawrence, however, in a letter to Canning, dated May, 1857, wrote:—"The new post office rules are bitter grievances; indeed the native community generally suffers by them, but the sepoy, having here special privileges, feels the deprivation in addition to the general uncertainty as to letters; nay, rather the positive certainty of not getting them." *Life of Sir H. Lawrence* by Sir H. Edwardes and H. Merivale. New York edition, p. 570. [The correctness of the statement in the text is confirmed by a well-informed critic,—formerly an officer in a sepoy regiment. See *Vanity Fair*, July 5, 1884.]

the Commissioner of Patna, reported upon the especially dangerous feelings which it had awakened amongst the bigoted Mahometans of his Division. A reassuring proclamation, which the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal issued in consequence of this warning, did not lessen the general alarm; for the people believed that a Government which could meditate their conversion would be quite capable of making a false statement to lull their suspicions. Nor were the professed ministers of the Gospel the only missionaries. Certain earnest-minded officers, of whom a Colonel Wheler was the most prominent, preached to their men with the enthusiasm of Cromwell's captains, and brought down upon themselves the displeasure of Government by their zeal.* And, though Canning was himself guiltless of the proselytism with which he was charged, he innocently incurred obloquy by giving formal sanction to the Bill prepared by Dalhousie for the removal of all legal obstacles to the marriage of Hindoo widows. The excitement and alarm which this combination of causes produced were not confined to the sepoys; for these men had friends or relations in every village, and were especially connected by the ties of kinship with the population of Oude and the North-Western Provinces, where our rule had provoked the most bitter animosities. But why should they think that Government wished to convert them? Their imaginations supplied a plausible answer. The white man was bent upon taking away their caste, and making them Christians, in order that, no longer hesitating to eat his strengthening food, or to embark in his ships, they might be able to go forth at his bidding, as warriors endowed with new vigour, to gratify his insatiable ambition by fresh conquests. This, if they could help it, they were resolved that they would never do. They had served the effete Feringhees for scanty wages long enough. Their own day was coming now. Vague ambitions arose in their hearts. Sooner or later, they would vindicate the honour of religion; they would enrich themselves by plunder; they would collect the revenues; they would drive the white upstarts into the sea. And now, as if to give confidence to the disaffected, and to shake the loyalty of the faithful, an old Hindoo prophecy was raked up, which said that

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* Wheler's preaching may possibly, owing to other circumstances, have been harmful, but would not have been so in itself.

in the year 1857, the hundredth since its foundation by the victory of Plassey, the Company's Raj was to be destroyed *

Infuriated by real grievances, haunted by groundless fears, tossed about by idle rumours, the enemies of British rule were still afraid to strike, when the arch-agitators lighted by an accident upon the spell, the potency of which was to liberate the pent-up passions of their dupes, and nerve them to revolt

The greased cartridge

A few idle words betrayed the existence of this engine of rebellion One day in January, 1857, a Lascar, attached to the magazine at Dum-Dum near Calcutta, asked a sepoy of the garrison to give him a drink of water from his lotah † Nettled by the haughty reply that the vessel would be contaminated by the lips of a low-caste man, the Lascar retorted that the sepoy would soon be deprived of his caste altogether, for the Government was busy manufacturing cartridges greased with the fat of cows or swine, and the sepoys would have to bite the forbidden substance before loading

It is hard to convey to the mind of an English reader an adequate idea of the force of the shock beneath which the imagination of that Brahmin must have reeled when he heard these words It was all true, then, he must have felt The Government were really bent upon ruining him They had devised an expedient which, under the specious pretext of putting a better weapon into his hands, was to destroy his caste, his honour, his social position, everything that made life worth having, and to pave the way for his perversion to Christianity It must be remembered that not faith, not righteousness, but ritual was the essence of his religion For him to be told that he was to touch with his lips the fat of the cow was as appalling as it would have been to a mediæval Catholic to listen to the sentence of excommunication ‡

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* The evidence for the facts recorded in this paragraph is to be found in the *Parl Papers, Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, newspapers published in India, Gubbins's *Mutinies in Oudh*, &c &c

† A brass drinking-vessel

‡ I make the comparison to excommunication advisedly Just as excommunication could be remedied by penance, so could loss of caste Many loose and exaggerated statements have been made about the effect which the story of the greased cartridges must have had upon the imaginations of the sepoys For instance, the author of the *Red Pamphlet* gave great point and emphasis to his narrative by asserting that the cow was regarded by Hindoos as an incarnation of Deity I have taken great pains to investigate

Yet it was all a delusion. There was some foundation for what the Lascar said, that was all The manufacture of greased cartridges to be used with the new Enfield rifle, which was superseding the old musket, had long been going on, but none were destined to be issued to the sepoys Greased cartridges were no novelty They had first been sent out to India in 1853 Colonel Tucker, who was then Adjutant-General of the Bengal army, at once foreseeing the alarm which they might cause, had warned his superiors against issuing them to the native troops until it should have been distinctly ascertained that the grease was inoffensive but his letter had gone no further than to the Board which was at that time vested with military authority at Calcutta Colonel Birch, the Military Secretary, who had fallen under the ban of Charles Napier, was accused by the old general's admirers of having neglected Tucker's solemn warning * But, in fact, he never received that warning It was the Military Board that neglected it, and on the Board the chief blame must lie †

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the point Mill states that the cow is worshipped in India *Hist of Brit India*, vol i p 297 His editor, H H Wilson, corrects him, remarking that "the worship of the cow by the Hindoos is a popular error" *Ib* note 2 Talboys Wheeler says "the bull and the cow are worshipped all over India The bull is a masculine deity associated with the worship of Siva or Mahádeva The cow is worshipped and reverenced by all Hindus, as the universal mother, the personification of earth, the incarnation of the goddess Lakshmi" *Short Hist of India*, pp 64-5 Bewildered by these conflicting authorities, I wrote to one of the most distinguished of living scholars, asking for his opinion "I do not think," he replied, "that a cow is anywhere in India considered as an incarnation of the Deity" Since then the kindness of Dr Rost, who referred me to an article on "Beef in Ancient India" by Bába Rajendralála Mitra, has enabled me to ascertain the truth beyond the possibility of a doubt The learned writer of the article in question points out that beef was at one time actually eaten by the Hindoos, and that cattle were sacrificed to Vishnu, Indra, and other deities "When," he concludes, "the Brahmans had to contend against Buddhism, which emphatically and so successfully denounced all sacrifices, they found the doctrine of respect for animal life too strong and too popular to be overcome, and therefore gradually and imperceptibly adopted it in such a manner as to make it appear a part of their S'ástra" *Journal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol [illegible]. part 1, pp 174, 196

* *Red Pamphlet*, p 15

† Colonel Tucker, in a letter to the *Times* (Oct 1, 1857, p 8, col. 3) wrote that even if his remonstrance had been addressed to the Military Board, Birch was to blame for not having acquainted himself with what had been written on the subject of issuing new arms and cartridges to the sepoys, and for not having examined the records of the Board.

At the time, however, the neglect produced no evil results The cartridges were issued to certain sepoy regiments, to test the powers of the new rifle, and were received without a murmur In 1856 similar cartridges began to be actually manufactured in India, and at Meerut Brahmin factory-boys handled the grease without a thought of its affecting their caste It was not till the Lascar blurted out the truth that the note of alarm was struck

The terrified Brahmin rushed off to tell his comrades, and from them the report flew in all directions with the lightning-like rapidity with which news, and especially bad news, travels in India * The agitators who were preaching sedition in secret, hailed the story with delight, and, as they retailed it to their disciples, clothed it with new terrors The Brahmins of Calcutta, the most cunning and the most formidable of their order, taught their brethren in the North-Western Provinces to turn it to account for the excitement of the caste prejudices of the whole Hindoo population † The agents of the King of Oude, who was then living in Calcutta, used it to increase the odium of those who had deprived him of his throne It was by such means that this crowning professional grievance of the sepoys was twisted into a grievance affecting their co-religionists of every condition

The effects were instantly manifest General Hearsey, who commanded the Presidency Division, reported on the 28th of January that there was ill-feeling among his men At Barrackpore and at Raneegunge, where was stationed a wing of the 2nd Bengal Grenadiers, a Barrackpore regiment, the sepoys nightly vented their rage by setting fire to public buildings and their officers' bungalows There was hardly a man of the four regiments at these two stations who did not see in the manufacture of the greased cartridges a foul plot for the destruction of his religion But official routine hindered the prompt action which might possibly have nipped the evil in the bud Lieutenant Wright, who commanded the detachment to which the Brahmin belonged, reported the story of the Lascar

* On the 22nd of January the officer who commanded the detachment to which the Brahmin belonged wrote officially, "Some of the depôt men in conversing with me last night said that the report had spread throughout India"—*Parl Papers*, vol. xxx (1857), p 37

† See App I.

on the 22nd of January General Hearsey, through whom the report passed, wisely appended to it a recommendation that the sepoys should be allowed to grease their own cartridges as they pleased but the report had to pass through a series of offices before it reached the Government, and it was not till the 28th that Hearsey heard of the approval of his suggestion It was too late. The day before, a native officer at Barrackpore, as if unwilling to believe in the wicked intentions which were imputed to his rulers, had asked whether any orders had been received about the cartridges, and his commanding officer could only answer, No

Jan 23

Jan 27

Meanwhile the Military Secretary had begun to ask for that information about the cartridges which he ought long before to have obtained Finding that none had yet been issued to the native army, he telegraphed to the Adjutant-General to see that all cartridges issued from the factory at Meerut were free from grease, and leave the men to use whatever material they liked best, and warned the commandants of the Rifle Depôts at Umballah and Sealkote not to allow any greased cartridges that might have been issued to be used Finally, he recommended that the Commander-in-Chief should be directed to proclaim to the army that no greased cartridges were to be issued to them, and that they might use whatever material they thought proper But Canning allowed himself to be persuaded by the Adjutant-General to reject this advice on the ground that, as the sepoys at Meerut had long been in the habit of using mutton-fat for their cartridges, the General Order, by suggesting to their minds the idea of an objectionable grease, might set them thinking that the grease which they had hitherto used involved some offence to their caste He should have reflected that, as the fear of the greased cartridges must anyhow soon reach the sepoys at Meerut, the General Order could do no harm, and might do good But perhaps the incident was only important as showing how easily the Governor-General could be led by his advisers,' for the fruitlessness of the proclamation that had been intended to soothe the fears that had been aroused by the missionary manifesto of 1856, had shown how difficult it was to eradicate a delusion once firmly fixed in the mind of a native

Action of Government

Jan 27

Proof was soon forthcoming that the delusion of the greased

cartridges had taken root While common sense dictated the necessity of early isolating all tainted regiments, military routine allowed two detachments of the 34th Native Infantry to march on special duty from Barrackpore to Berhampore On arriving there, they were anxiously questioned about the truth of the cartridge story by the men of the 19th, who had caught the alarm some three weeks before, but had been for the moment tranquillised by the explanations of their commandant. What they heard from the 34th reawakened their fears

Colonel Mitchell and the 19th Native Infantry

Feb 26

On the evening of the next day their commandant, Colonel Mitchell, was informed that they had refused to receive their percussion caps for the following morning's parade, on the ground that they were suspicious of the cartridges A judicious officer would have at least tried the effect of quietly explaining to the men the unreasonableness of their fears Mitchell, however, hastened in hot passion to the lines,* and spoke so angrily to the sepoys that they felt sure their fears were well founded They could not believe that their colonel would allow himself to threaten them so savagely if he was not uneasily conscious of the injustice of his cause They therefore remained where they were, sullen and fearful, while Mitchell returned to his quarters, harassed by the thought of coming danger, and not knowing how he could meet it without a single company of British soldiers to aid him He was not kept long in suspense Just after he had lain down, he heard the sound of drums and angry voices coming from the lines He knew that mutiny was upon him What was he to do? He must either try single-handed to pacify a regiment of mutineers, or attempt the hazardous experiment of coercing his native infantry with his native cavalry and artillery He chose the latter course Hastily dressing, he summoned his officers ordered the cavalry and artillery to the lines, and, going thither himself, found the 19th drawn up, trembling with fear. The sight of their comrades, ready, as they imagined, to fire upon them, increased their agitation Then, for the second time, the colonel began to threaten fiercely his panic-stricken soldiers who, like beasts maddened with fear, might at any moment turn upon those whom they believed to be seeking their lives

* Long rows of huts in which the sepoys lived The word will often recur

Seeing what a dreadful effect his words were producing, the native officers pressed forward, and implored him to calm the men's fears by withdrawing the force which had been brought up to overawe them If once they saw that they were not to be compelled by violence to use the dreaded cartridges, they would lay down their arms without demur Mitchell saw that he had placed himself in a false position He could not act upon the advice of the officers without yielding a moral victory to [illegible] men He could not disregard that advice without provo[illegible] a mutiny And then, what if the cavalry and artillery sh[illegible] sympathise with the mutineers instead of acting against th[illegible]? Clutching at a compromise, he said that he would wi[illegible]aw his supporting force, but would certainly hold a par[illegible] of all arms in the morning But, when the native offi[illegible] again interposed, warning him that he would thus only de[illegible]he outbreak, he saw that he must yield altogether

[illegible] he departed, and left his men at leisure to reflect on wh[illegible]ey had done They had taken the lead in mutiny but, wh[illegible]hey reassembled in the morning, there was depression ra[illegible] than exultation in their demeanour They seemed as[illegible]d of themselves, and, though they continued to show m[illegible]us ways that they were still haunted by suspicion, they di[illegible]ged their duties thenceforth with obedience and punctu[illegible]. It was impossible to overlook their conduct but it wa[illegible]ally impossible to punish it with due promptitude, for no [illegible]opean troops could be spared to coerce them The falsene[illegible] the economy that had weakened the surest support of B[illegible] supremacy was now too clear All that Canning could d[illegible] to send for the 84th Regiment from Rangoon *

G[illegible] H[illegible]nd th[illegible]

[illegible]re the regiments at Barrackpore handed on the torch to their brethren at Berhampore, they had worked themselves into a state of feverish excitement When the order to allow them to use their own grease was issued, their diseased fancy suggested th[illegible] shining cartridge paper must contain grease The p[illegible]as analysed and reported harmless, but still they ref[illegible]o be comforted At last Hearsey, who spoke their language like themselves, and knew them better than they knew themselves, paraded them, and tr[illegible]o convince them that they had nothing to fear His

* [illegible]rl Papers, vol xxx (1857), pp 39, 47, 95, 297–325, 327–31, 333–5

attempt ought to have made it clear to the Government that the madness of their army was not to be cured by any soothing remedy, for, though his speech could not have been improved upon, its good effects were only transient When the 34th, with whose fears there was far more of ill-feeling mixed than with those of the Berhampore regiment, heard what the latter had done, their surliness increased, and, marvelling that their comrades went unpunished, they began to dread that, under the mask of leniency, Government was preparing for the whole brigade some terrible doom But the Governor-General had no desire to be hard upon them He sympathised with their doubts and scruples, and was only anxious to remove them as gently as he could Accordingly he accepted a suggestion that the sepoys should be allowed to pinch off the ends of their cartridges instead of biting them, and so avoid the taste of the paper * The concession was, as might have been expected, useless Habit, the sepoys objected, would make them use their teeth instead of their fingers Meanwhile, Hearsey had resolved to try the effect of another speech Again he assured his men that there was no design against their caste or their religion, and that, as they had not been convicted of any crime, they need fear no punishment That was to be kept for those who had deserved it, the mutinous 19th

March 17

This was the part of Hearsey s address that had most effect upon his hearers Thinking over the fate that was in store for their comrades, they paid no heed to the assurance that they need have no fear for themselves. Twelve days later Lieutenant Baugh, adjutant of the 34th, was in his quarters, when the havildar-major† came running in to report that there was more than the usual excitement in the lines, and that one man, bolder than the rest, had proclaimed himself a mutineer Promptly riding towards the lines, the adjutant saw a single sepoy, named Mungul Pandy, marching up and down in front of the quarter-guard, calling upon his comrades to join him, and strike a blow for their religion, and threatening to shoot the first European whom he saw Suiting the action to the word, the mutineer had no sooner seen the adjutant than he

Mungul Pandy

March 29

* The suggestion was made by Major Bontein on March 2 —*Parl Papers*, vol xxx (1857), p 7

† Native sergeant-major

fired at him from behind the shelter of the station gun, and brought his horse to the ground. Baugh sprang unhurt to his feet, advanced on the mutineer, and fired at him, but missed. Then began a desperate hand-to-hand encounter. The mutineer drew his tulwar,* and slashed the adjutant across his left hand and neck. The sergeant-major of the regiment rushed to support his officer, but the sepoy was a match for them both. Hard by stood the guard of twenty sepoys looking on unconcerned, and, when the sergeant-major shouted to their jemadar † for aid, he made no attempt to bring them forward, and even suffered them to strike their helpless officers with the butt-ends of their muskets. One man only, a Mahometan named Sheikh Pultoo, came to help the struggling Europeans, and held the mutineer while they escaped. Meanwhile, other European officers were hurrying to the spot. One of them, Colonel Wheler of the 34th, ordered the guard to seize the mutineer: but no one obeyed him. Then Grant, the brigadier of the station, interposed his superior authority ‡ but still the guard paid no heed. The solitary but successful mutineer was still taunting his comrades for allowing him to fight their battles unaided; the British officers, their authority despised, were still looking helplessly on, when their chief with his two sons rode up at a gallop to the ground. Indignantly he asked his officers why they had not arrested the mutineer. They answered that the guard would not obey orders. "Not obey orders," said Hearsey, significantly pointing to his revolver, "listen to me: the first man who refuses to march when I give the word is a dead man. Quick, march!" Sullenly the guard submitted, and followed their master to arrest Mungul Pandy; but he too saw that the day was lost, and in despair turned his musket against himself. He fell wounded, but he did not save himself from a felon's death. §

Disbanding of the 19th. March 30.

The general had suppressed open mutiny, but he could not hinder secret mischief. Next day the 19th, who had marched quietly and penitently down from Berhampore, knowing that, when they

* Native sword.

† Native lieutenant.

‡ This is mentioned by Cave-Browne (*The Punjaub and Delhi*, p. 20), but not in the proceedings of the Court of Enquiry recorded in the *Parl. Papers*.

§ Letter in *Calcutta Englishman*, April 4, 1857; *Parl. Papers*, vol. xxx (1857), pp. 126, 135–7; Cave-Browne's *The Punjaub and Delhi in 1857*, vol. i, pp. 20, 21.

reached their goal, they were to be disbanded, were met at Barasut by some emissaries from the 34th, who urged them to join that regiment in slaughtering the European officers. But the 19th atoned for their past sins by resisting the tempters, and marched on sadly to Barrackpore. There, on the last day of March, confronted by two field batteries and all the European and native troops that could be mustered, they listened to their sentence, piled their arms in obedience to the order which it conveyed, and received their last issue of pay. Then, with Hearsey's kind farewell ringing in their ears, they went their way, cheering their old general; for they knew that, while he punished, he forgave them.

Delay of Canning in punishing the 34th

April 8

Very different was the treatment of the sullen 34th. Mungul Pandy was indeed tried and sentenced on the 6th of April, and executed two days later. But though the jemadar who had forbidden his men to aid their officers was sentenced on the 11th, his execution was delayed till the 21st,* owing to a difficulty which routine threw in the way. Worse still, the men themselves, who had struck their defenceless officers, were suffered to go absolutely unpunished, because the Governor-General feared that any hasty act of retribution would confirm instead of allaying the evil temper of the army. He did not know that the army attributed his leniency not to humanity but to fear.

How he acted, and how he ought to have acted

The records of the proceedings of Government during these months are indeed a melancholy, though not unedifying collection. While the Governor-General ought to have been acting, he was wasting his time in trying to solve casuistical puzzles, writing elegant minutes, and devising elaborate expedients for coaxing the sepoys into accepting the cartridges. The cartridges would have offered no terrors to troops who were under a strict discipline, and who had an affectionate confidence in their officers. John Jacob's irregulars laughed at the idea that any sensible man could possibly object to them. Such a healthy state of mind was not indeed to be expected from the Bengal sepoys; but they were not beyond the reach of a drastic remedy. When a number of men are possessed by a delusion, to endeavour to reason away each successive development of

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* Cave-Browne, vol. i. pp. 20, 21; *Parl. Papers*, vol. xxx. (1857), p. 145.

the morbid fancies is the surest way to encourage the fertility of the latter. Even if the cartridges had been altogether withdrawn, matters would not have been mended the sepoys would simply have felt that the Government was afraid of them. If Canning had understood their characters, he would have seen that it was his duty to give one clear and patient explanation of the harmless character of the cartridges that were being issued; then to peremptorily insist on their being accepted and used; and to punish with terrific severity the first man, if ne...ry the first regiment, that disobeyed

...g before this the infection had spread beyond the furthest limits of the North-Western Provinces In the middle of March the Commander-in-Chief, who, escorted by the 36th Native Infantry, was engaged on ...ur of inspection, had arrived at Umballah Two non-co...ioned officers belonging to a detachment of the 36th, w... was already at the station, ran out to welcome their comra... but, instead of receiving the cheery greeting which they e...d, were railed at as perverts to Christianity, handlers of th...ursed cartridges The miserable men ran to the musk...structor of their regiment, Lieutenant Martineau, and t... what had befallen them He saw at once the terrible s...nce of their story, and promptly took pains to ascertain th...ngs of the troops, by whom he was thoroughly trusted

E...nt at U...

Next day he reported, as the result of his enquiries, to the Assistant Adjutant-General that t... Bengal army was labouring under a dread of con-v...and had resolved to treat as outcastes any men who s...degrade themselves by using the cartridges The Com-m...n-Chief tried himself to soothe the men of the station, ...ble to address them except through an interpreter, he ...likely to succeed when Hearsey had failed The native ...stened respectfully to his arguments, but privately ...tineau that, though their own fears had been removed, ...ral fears of the army remained Must they obey the ...use the cartridges, they piteously asked, when obedi...uld cast them out from the society of their comrades, ...n of their own families Anson was sorely perplexed ... unwilling to discontinue rifle practice at the depôt, in ...nce to prejudices which his best native officers admitted groundless; but, when those officers told him that, unless yielded to the groundless prejudices, their lives would be

made a burden to them, he was loth to be severe At last, however, the Governor-General put an end to his difficulties by deciding that concession would be weakness.

April 4

As soon as this decision had been made known to the men, fires began to break out in the Government buildings and the officers' bungalows The authorities, who had not yet learned that incendiarism was the regular symptom of coming mutiny, were long unable to find a clue to the origin of these outrages Courts of enquiry were held, but no one would come forward to give evidence Later on, however, a hut belonging to a sepoy attached to the musketry school was set on fire. On the following night five huts belonging to men of the 60th Native Infantry, were burned down The former was clearly an expression of the hatred felt towards the musketry school sepoys for submitting to use the cartridges The latter was an act of retaliation Probably, then, the earlier fires had also been the work of sepoys Towards the end of April this conjecture was verified by the evidence of a Sikh attached to the school, who said that the men had sworn to burn down every bungalow in the station, in revenge for the order to use the cartridges *

Incendiarism April 17

April 22

April 23

Thus, within three months after the Lascar had told his story, it had become an article of faith with nine tenths of the sepoys in Northern India Meanwhile another delusion had fixed itself in their minds Persuaded that Government had concocted this hellish plot for the destruction of their caste, they could easily believe that, if it could not force its unclean cartridges upon them, it would find some other engine of pollution The new fable said that the officers were mixing dust ground from the bones of cows with the flour for their men's use, and throwing it into the wells There had been like stories at earlier periods of Anglo-Indian history, but the times had never before been so favourable for their circulation. That the present belief was no sham was proved by the conduct of the men at Cawnpore, who, though the flour sold there had risen far above its usual price, refused to touch a cheap supply sent specially down from Meerut, because they feared that it had been adulterated. And,

The bone-dust fable

* Cave-Browne, vol i. p 49

while this new lie was adding to the perplexities of the English, they were asking each other what could be the meaning of a mysterious phenomenon which had startled them a few weeks before. In January a strange symbol, the flat cake or chupatty which forms the staple food of the Indian people, began to pass from village to village through the length and breadth of the North-Western Provinces, like the fiery cross that summoned the clansmen of Roderick to battle. Here and there a magistrate tried in vain to stop the distribution. The meaning of the portent has never been positively discovered; but it is certain that many of the natives regarded it as a warning that Government was plotting the overthrow of their religion.* Whether or not the authors of the distribution intended to create this belief, the belief itself had its share in unsettling men's minds.

The chupatties

Meanwhile at Delhi, where Behaudur Shah, the aged representative of the house of Timour, was still suffered to hold his court, the news of the gathering disloyalty of the sepoys had begun to stir the smouldering embers of Mahometan fanaticism into flame. It was of the last importance to the English to keep a firm hold upon that city; for it contained a vast magazine stored with munitions of war which were practically inexhaustible. Yet they had permitted the palace, which dominated the magazine, to remain in the hands of a Mahometan prince, and, with incredible folly, had neglected to post a single company of British soldiers to keep a check upon the native garrison.† And now

Excitement at Delhi

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* See evidence collected by Kaye, vol. i. pp. 632–9. On the other hand, Major Williams in his *Memo. on the Mutiny of Meerut* wrote: "The circulation of chupatties so shortly before the outbreak, though appearing to us most mysterious and suspicious, yet, if we may credit the statements of those I have questioned on the subject ... was not regarded by them as an ill omen, but supposed to have originated in some vow," p. 4. The truth evidently is that the chupatties were regarded differently in different districts.

[Mr. Thornhill (*Adventures during the Indian Mutiny*, p. 3) says that a similar distribution of chupatties preceded the Mutiny at Vellore in 1806.]

† Kaye (vol. ii. p. 17, note) says that Sir Charles Napier, when Commander-in-Chief, did not lay any stress upon the fact that no European troops were posted in Delhi. He may not have done so in his official correspondence, but in a private letter to an artillery officer he wrote: "Men from all parts of Asia meet in Delhi, and some day or other much mischief will be hatched within those city walls, and no European troops at hand. I have no confidence in the allegiance of your high-caste mercenaries."—*History of the Siege of Delhi*, by an Officer who served there, p. 10, note.

the hearts of the Mahometans were beating fast in the expectation of great political changes by which their city was again to become the imperial city of India It was universally believed that a vast Russian army was soon coming to expel the English. A native journal announced that Dost Mahomed, the pretended ally of the Governor-General, was secretly encouraging Persia to resist him The courtiers in the recesses of the palace talked of a general mutiny of the sepoy army as an event sure to happen soon, and believed that it would restore the King to the position of his ancestors, and advance their own fortunes The King, though for his part he never believed that the sepoys would rally round one so poor and so fallen as himself, fancied that, if the British Government were to be overthrown, a new dominant power would arise, which would treat him more respectfully and considerately than its predecessor had done *

Nana Sahib's tour

In this gloomy spring of 1857, while the hearts of a turbulent soldiery were failing them for fear, yet vibrating with ambition, while officers and civilians, blind to what was passing around them, were dining, and dancing, and marrying, and giving in marriage, there was one man who, wandering from place to place, and observing the signs of the times, considered how he might make his profit out of them, but did not yet imagine the grim details of the part that destiny had reserved for *him* It was not strange that, as the Nana Sahib passed on his way from Bithoor through Calpee, Delhi, and Lucknow, the English saw nothing remarkable in such unwonted activity on the part of a native nobleman Never doubting the justice of the decision which had refused to him the continu-

April

* Evidence taken before the Court appointed for the Trial of the King of Delhi, pp 115, 120, 121, 157 This seems the right place to speak of a proclamation, purporting to come from the Shah of Persia, which was posted up on the walls of the Jumma Musjid in Delhi in March, 1857 This proclamation stated that a Persian army was coming to expel the English from India, and called upon all true Mahometans to put on their armour, and join the invaders —Kaye (vol i p 483) appears to regard it as genuine, but Sir Theophilus Metcalfe and other witnesses examined at the trial of the king, spoke of it as the work of an impostor, and said that it attracted scarcely any attention Evidence, &c pp 70, 80 The Shah afterwards admitted that he had fomented disaffection in Upper India during the Persian war and had intended to invade India, but in Oct 1857 he offered to lend 30,000 men to the British Government —*Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, Nov 24, 1857, p 455

ance of his adoptive father's pension, they did not know the abiding resentment which it had stirred up in his soul Thus he went his way and none can tell what foul treasons he was even then hatching But it is probable that he had long been trying to stir up the native princes against the English, and that, at first indifferent, they lent a ready ear to his suggestions after the annexation of Oude had aroused their discontent *

All this time Henry Lawrence was striving with holy zeal at once to redress the grievances of the afflicted people of Oude, and to disarm their resentment The officials had hushed their quarrels at his coming, and had united in devotion to his will. He had won the affection of Jackson, though he had not hesitated to reprove his follies, and he had gained the confidence and sympathy of Gubbins He was able to write, a few weeks after his arrival, that all his subordinates were loyally supporting him † But he had to complain too of the blind haste with wh[illegible]h they had forced their improvements on the people, and of [illegible]e bitter resentment which they had evoked by demolishing ho[illegible]es, seizing religious buildings as Government property, an[illegible]ixing an excessive rate of revenue in their anxiety to show th[illegible]rofitableness of annexation ‡ Nor had the seditious utt[illegible]ances of the Moulvie been the only dangerous symptoms of [illegible]scontent An angry townsman had thrown a clod at Lawren[illegible] himself, while he was driving through the streets. But by [illegible]e seizure and imprisonment of the Moulvie, the prompt pa[illegible]ent of the pensions which had been promised to the royal fa[illegible]y and their dependents, the issue of orders for the read[illegible]sion of the displaced native officials and disbanded native sol[illegible]rs to employment, and the promise of restitution to the di[illegible]sessed landholders, Lawrence quickly restored order, and re-[illegible]ablished content among the great mass of the civil popula[illegible]. It was from the sepoy regiments alone that he looked fo[illegible]nger.

Henry Lawrence tries to heal discontent in Oude

[illegible]ye, vol i p 579 and note, App pp 646–8, Forjett (*Our Real Danger in* [illegible]*a*) disbelieves the story of the Nana's intrigues

[illegible]*fe of Sir H Lawrence*, pp 555–7, 564

[illegible]ubbins, the Financial Commissioner, himself admitted that the rate of re[illegible]e had, in some instances, been fixed too high —*Mutinies in Oudh* p [illegible] Still, the total amount raised by the British Government was only Rs [illegible]04,89,755, whereas the ex-king had exacted Rs 138,03,781.—*Annual R*[illegible]*t on the Administration of the Province of Oude for* 1858–9, p 32

While Lawrence was waiting quietly for the storm which he hoped that he would be strong enough to weather,* Canning, observing a general lull, deceived himself with the belief that it presaged a lasting calm Nor was he alone in his want of foresight It does not appear that a single official of rank in India, except Sir Henry Lawrence, was seriously troubled by forebodings On the 4th of May John Lawrence wrote that the sepoys at the musketry school were charmed with the new rifle Their officers confirmed his opinion General Barnard warmly praised the patient zeal of the men at Umballah in extinguishing the fires which, though he would not believe it, some of their own number had caused The Commander-in-Chief was so little impressed by the symptoms of mutiny which obtruded themselves upon his attention, that he did not think it worth while to make a single representation about them to the home authorities † It was not extraordinary then that the Governor-General, who knew little of India, and who had no genius to supply the lack of experience, should have failed to perceive that a general mutiny was at hand It was no wonder that he laboured at his ordinary round of business as calmly as if no danger-signals had appeared, and thought that there was no further need for the presence of the regiment which he had fetched from Rangoon ‡ He could not foresee that in a few days he would have cause to rejoice that there had been no vessel to convey it back to Burmah when he had ordered its return Still, he could not ignore the misconduct of the 34th, or misunderstand the reports of their daily increasing insolence and untrustworthiness Yet, whereas he should have long since severely punished these sullen soldiers, and executed the guard who had dared to strike their adjutant, he tortured himself with doubts as to the justice of even disbanding the remaining companies,—those companies of which not a single man had stirred to arrest their mutinous comrade,—and wasted precious days in wearisome discussion, until the remonstrances of Hearsey and Anson roused him to action Even then he spent four more days in examining with microscopic accuracy the

Canning hopes that quiet is returning

* *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, pp 564-5, 568

† *Letters of Indophilus to the Times*, p 25

‡ Montgomery Martin's *The Indian Empire*, vol. ii p 135, Mead's *Sepoy Revolt*, p 59

claims of individuals to indulgence, so that his decision was not made known until the 4th of May, five weeks after the commission of the crime The delay in punishing, however, was less fatal than the choice of punishment The disbanded sepoys, stripped of their uniforms, but suffered to retain the Kilmarnock caps which they had paid for themselves, contemptuously trampled under foot these only remaining tokens of their former allegiance to the Company,* and, welcoming their so-called punishment as a happy release from bondage, went off with light hearts to swell the number of our enemies Discontented Europeans muttered against the lenity of the Governor-General, uncompromising journalists openly attacked it†, and, worst of all, when the order for disbandment was read out at the military stations throughout the country, and the sepoys, after listening to its solemn denunciations of the terrible crime which their comrades had committed, and expecting to hear that a terrible punishment had been inflicted upon them, learned at last that they had been sentenced not to death but to disbandment, they did not care to conceal their contempt for rulers whom they now believed to be afraid to punish them ‡ Henry Lawrence, who understood what an effect the order must have upon the minds of the sepoys, would not allow it to be published at Lucknow § He had lately proved that he was as able to suppress mutiny himself as he was sagacious in detecting the failure of his superiors to suppress it

Disbandment of the 34th comments of the sepoys

The finest sepoy corps at Lucknow, the 48th Native Infantry, was the first to manifest a mutinous spirit Early in April Dr Wells, the surgeon of the regiment, feeling unwell, went into the hospital for a bottle of medicine, and raised it to his lips, forgetting that he had thus hopelessly polluted it in the eyes of his Hindoo patients The sepoys soon heard what he had done, and raised an outcry for their caste Their colonel had the bottle broken in their presence, and severely reprimanded the

Mutiny at Lucknow

* *Red Pamphlet*, pp 33-4

† *Friend of India*, May 14, 1857, p 459, *Overland Bombay Times*, 1857 ... 1, Mead, pp 58-9, *Englishman*, Ap 8, 1857

‡ Pritchard's *Mutinies in Rajpootana*, pp 24-5

§ *Red Pamphlet*, p 34

offender, but the matter did not end there. A few days later Wells's bungalow was burned down, and it was soon known that the regiment was thoroughly disaffected. Still no overt act of mutiny took place. But May brought a change. On the 1st of that month the recruits of the 7th Oude Irregular Infantry refused to accept their cartridges, on the ground that their seniors had warned them that the obnoxious grease had been applied to the ends. The officers laboured, apparently with some success, to explain to their men that the cartridges were precisely the same that they had been in the habit of using. But the day after this explanation had been given, not the recruits only but the whole regiment refused to touch them. Then Lawrence ordered the Brigadier to hold a parade, and try the effect of a conciliatory speech. It was no use. The men said that they must do as the rest of the army did. Even of the well-intentioned sepoys only the most resolutely faithful could stand against the opinion of their public. Let Englishmen think whether they could have resisted the terrors of social ostracism and religious excommunication before they condemn poor ignorant Asiatics. But this particular regiment was not well intentioned. On Sunday, the 3rd of May, they were drifting from passive towards active mutiny. When Lawrence heard that they had threatened to murder their officers, he saw that he must act promptly, and, taking with him his whole available force, he marched against the mutineers. It was late in the evening when he confronted them. By the uncertain light of the moon the mutineers saw an irresistible force before them, and were anxiously expecting its movement, when suddenly a port-fire was incautiously lighted by one of Lawrence's artillerymen, and seemed to their guilty imaginations to be the signal for their destruction. First a sepoy here and there stole away; then great gaps appeared in their ranks, and soon all but a hundred and twenty had fled. The rest laid down their arms at Lawrence's order, and before two in the morning the troops had returned to their lines.*

May 2

When Canning heard of this fresh outbreak, he bethought him of his old remedy, disbandment; but Dorin was beginning

* Gubbins, pp. 3, 10-13; *Life of Sir H. Lawrence*, pp. 562-3, 571; *Parl. Papers*, vol. xxx (1857), pp. 247-8.

to discern the signs of the times, and demanded a severer punishment.* The multitude of counsellors were still busily recording their opinions in elaborate minutes, when a telegram was passed from one to another, containing the first dim tidings of a disaster which all felt to be the heaviest that had yet befallen them.

Opinions of Canning and his counsellors thereon.

At the great military station of Meerut were quartered the 11th and 20th regiments of Native Infantry and the 3rd Native Cavalry. The station covered a great extent of ground, and was split into two parts by a deep ditch. On the northern side were scattered a number of officers' bungalows. Beyond them stretched the European barracks. The church stood between the barracks of the infantry and those of the cavalry. A long way off, on the opposite side of the ditch, were the native lines. The intervening space was covered by a wilderness of bazaars, extending southwards in the direction of the town.† The radical fault in the plan of the station was the great distance that separated the quarters of the European from those of the native troops.

Meerut.

The Lascar's story had caused even more excitement at Meerut than elsewhere. The English residents, however, feared nothing; for they were guarded by a dragoon regiment, a battalion of the 60th Rifles, and bodies of horse and foot artillery, forming altogether the strongest European force at any post in the North-Western Provinces. Still the officers, confident though they were, did not neglect the usual conciliatory assurances to their men. But the excitement was not abated. At length Colonel Smyth, who commanded the 3rd Native Cavalry, a hard and unpopular officer,‡ but one of the few Europeans that had discerned symptoms of disease in the sepoy

* It is fair to say that on the 12th of May Canning recorded a minute, concurred in by Dorin as well as the other members of Council, in which he said, "I did not conceive, that ... all graver punishments would be swallowed up in disbandment." Dorin's original minute, however, was conceived in a far more vigorous spirit than that of Canning. "The sooner," he wrote, "this epidemic of mutiny is put a stop to the better. Mild measures won't do it. A severe example is wanted. ... I would try the whole of the men concerned for mutiny, and punish them with the utmost rigour of military law."—Ib. p. 249, inc. 4 in No. 14, pp. 252–3, inc. 8 in No. 14.

† Cave-Browne, vol. i. p. 51; Thornton's *Gazetteer*, vol. iii. p. 449; sketch-plan drawn for me by an officer who was once quartered at Meerut.

‡ See App. I.

army, resolved to take advantage of the order for tearing off the ends of the cartridges instead of biting them, to give a final explanation to his troopers Accordingly, on the 23rd of April, he ordered a parade of the skirmishers of his regiment for the following morning A rumour ran through the station that the skirmishers would refuse the cartridges, and a fire which broke out in the evening boded disaster In the course of the night the colonel was informed that the men desired the postponement of the parade but, as he had heard that the whole army was going to mutiny, he felt that to yield to such remonstrances would be a sin Early next morning ninety men met him on the parade-ground, but, though he pointed out to them how the new regulation had been drawn up out of consideration for their scruples, five only would even touch the cartridges * He could only break up the parade, and order a court of enquiry to assemble The court elicited the fact that, as at Umballah, not genuine fear of the cartridges, but fear of public opinion had influenced the mutineers † A report of the proceedings was sent to the Commander-in-Chief, and his orders were awaited All this time nightly fires told of the evil passions which were working in the sepoys' hearts, but few heeded the warning Early in May a message came from the Commander-in-Chief, ordering the mutineers to be tried by a native court-martial They had virtually nothing to say in defence of their conduct The court sentenced them to ten years' imprisonment, and General Hewitt, the commander of the Division, approved of the sentence for all, except eleven of the younger offenders, half of whose punishment he remitted On the morning of the 9th of May, beneath a sunless sky darkened by rolling storm-clouds, the whole brigade was assembled to see the culprits disgraced Stripped of their uniforms, these miserable felons were handed over to the smiths, who riveted fetters on their arms and legs In vain they entreated their general to have mercy upon them As they were being led away, they yelled out curses at their colonel ‡ Their brethren, choking with suppressed indignation, longed to strike a blow in their behalf, but fear was stronger than the thirst for vengeance After gazing passively

April 24.

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* Pamphlet by Col. Smyth, printed for private circulation.

† *Parl Papers*, vol. xliv (1857, 58), Part 4, p 178

‡ Montgomery Martin, vol ii p 146

at the removal of the prisoners to the gaol, they dispersed. There was an unnatural stillness in the lines for the rest of that day, an unwonted respectfulness in the manner of the sepoys towards their officers * But none could interpret the omen The lines of the sepoys were too far distant from the dwellings of the Europeans for the latter to hear what Mussulman and Hindoo were saying of them Officers jested at mess, civilians talked over the work of the day, ladies chatted gaily in their verandahs. On the Sunday morning the church held its usual congregation, and, when the worshippers returned to their homes, they hardly noticed the unusual absence of their native servants Here, as elsewhere, the self-satisfied Englishman knew nothing of the inner life of the despised races around him, and he was punished for his neglect by the moral blindness which would not let him guard against their vengeance Unknown to him, the sepoys were moving to and fro all that Sunday afternoon with war in their hearts, the courtesans were taunting the troopers who had looked on at the humiliation of their comrades, and calling upon them to prove their courage if they dared, the children were wondering at the strange commotion around them, and the budmashes, like foul harpies, were emerging from their haunts, to profit by the troubles which they foresaw. In the hearts of the sepoys a vague but irresistible fear mingled with hatred and the thirst for vengeance, and impelled them to anticipate the doom which they imagined the English to be preparing for them, while stronger than all their passions was the sense of a brotherhood linking them with the rest of the army, and joining with religious fanaticism to hurl them as martyrs against the British battalions, whose power they knew to be stronger than their own

May 10

Towards sunset the Christian residents prepared, as usual, for church One of the chaplain's female servants begged him to stay at home, assuring him that there was going to be a fight Disregarding her warning, he drove off But, as he approached the church, his ears caught the sharp reports of volleying musketry, and, looking up, he saw clouds of smoke ascending from burning houses into the air † The woman had

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* Cave-Browne, vol i p 53

† *The Chaplain's Narrative of the Siege of Delhi*, by the Rev J. E. W. Rotton, p 4

told the truth It was the dread with which the sepoys regarded the movements of the Rifles, whose assemblage for church parade they interpreted as the signal for their own imprisonment, that precipitated an outbreak which, not having been definitely pre-arranged, might otherwise have been deferred till a later day * Suddenly a cry was raised, "The Rifles and Artillery are coming to disarm all the native regiments", and the sepoys who were lounging in the bazaars started up, and, followed by a mob of townsmen, rushed wildly to their respective lines

The 3rd Cavalry took the lead Some hundreds of the troopers dashed off at a gallop towards the gaol, to the terror

* I have been convinced of this by the arguments of Colonel G W Williams, who collected a vast amount of evidence on the subject of the rising at Meerut, and prefaced it by an invaluable little essay, entitled Memorandum on the Mutiny and Outbreak at Meerut in 1857 He points out on p 3 that Nos 22 to 26 of the Depositions taken under his direction prove that "the mutineers fled as a disorganised mob many towards Dehlie, but others in totally opposite quarters,' which they would not have been likely to do if they had acted upon a pre-arranged plan The following extracts from the Depositions strongly support the argument P 7 "Q—Did the regiments preconcert the rebellion? A—The said regiments did not plot anything beforehand Had they done so, they would not have kept their wives and children with them as they did Q—How then (if there was no preconcerted plan) did the detached guards at some distance from the lines at once join the mutineers? A—The uproar and confusion was very great, and immediately it reached the guards, they joined their regiments" Other witnesses gave similar replies —See pp 10–14 A girl in the town was indeed told at 2 P M on the 10th that there was going to be a mutiny that day, but her informant was probably only repeating some vague utterances of the sepoys, and the incident does not prove more than that the idea of mutiny was "in the air"

There is, however, positive evidence that, whether the outbreak was prearranged or not, the native troops at Delhi expected that those at Meerut would sooner or later mutiny and come to join them At the Trial of the King of Delhi a news-writer named Jat Mall deposed, "I heard a few days before the outbreak, from some of the sepoys of the gate of the palace, that it had been arranged in case greased cartridges were pressed upon them, that the Meerut troops were to come here where they would be joined by the Delhi troops"—Evidence taken before the Court appointed for the Trial of the King of Delhi, p 72 The king's confidential physician, a highly trustworthy and intelligent witness, deposed that the 38th N I "said, that before the breaking out of the mutiny, they had leagued with the troops at Meerut, and that the latter had corresponded with the troops in all other places letters were received at Delhi, from which it was evident that they had beforehand made common cause among themselves" *Ib* p 158 Moreover it was afterwards discovered that a native attached to the Delhi magazine had been sending circulars on the subject of the greased cartridges to all the native regiments"—*Ib* p 78

of the quiet citizens whom they passed, smashed open the gate, and struck the fetters off their comrades Not all, however, were swept away by the tide of mutiny Colonel Smyth indeed never went near his regiment from the moment that he heard of their uprising, but two of his officers, Captain Craigie and Lieutenant Melville Clarke, handling their own troop as though mutiny were a thing unknown, brought it to the parade-ground in perfect order * Meanwhile the infantry regiments were surging tumultuously in their lines Hearing the uproar, the officers hastened thither, and began to remonstrate with their men. The latter were quietly submitting, when suddenly a trooper galloped past, and shouted out that the European troops were coming to disarm them The 20th at once ran to seize their muskets but the 11th, who had all along shown the least obstinate spirit, wavered Colonel Finnis, their commanding officer, was imploring them to be faithful, when some men of the other regiment fired upon him, and he fell riddled with bullets, the first victim of the Indian Mutiny Seeing the fall of their commandant, the 11th no longer hesitated to throw in their lot with his murderers †

The thirst of the mutineers for the blood of Christians was ... stimulated by the slaughter of Finnis The convicts, let loose from the gaols, and fraternising with the native police and the increasing swarm of budmashes, joined in the bloody work Gangs of these marauders, armed with swords and clubs, roamed about the station, hurled showers of bricks upon every ... European who crossed their path, burst into peaceful dwellings, murdered the inmates, and poured forth again laden with plunder, and the terrified witnesses of this dreadful scene heard mingling with the roar of the flames that leaped up from the fired houses the savage voices of Mahometans shouting, "... Ali" ‡ Soon, however, the sepoys had had enough of ...ge they were sure that the white troops must be ...ing "Quick, brother, quick!" was their cry, "Delhi, ...i", and the budmashes were left alone § Meanwhile, incredible as it may appear, the Treasury Guard, though beset by extraordinary temptations, remained faithful to their

* See App I
† Depositions, pp 3, 10-12, 14, 25
‡ Williams's Memo, pp 1, 7
§ Letter from Colonel Mollerus Le Champion (the Lieut Moller mentioned in the text), who was an eye-witness of the scene

7 *

trust* And, even when the rioters were doing their worst, their intended victims never doubted that the white regiments would soon come to rescue and avenge them

It was not the fault of the British soldier, but of his commander, still more of the system which had given him such a commander, that this hope was unfulfilled General Hewitt, an infirm old man who had long outlived whatever military capacity he might once have possessed, was almost too inert to be even bewildered by the crisis, and remained simply passive But Archdale Wilson, the Brigadier of the station, did make some attempt to grapple with the danger On receiving the news of the outbreak, he mounted his horse, ordered the British artillery to join him on the parade-ground of the Rifles, galloped thither himself, and directed the colonel to dismiss his men from church-parade, and reassemble them for action† But there was delay in supplying the Rifles with ammunition, and the Dragoons were nowhere to be seen, for, as they were on their way to grapple with the sepoys, Wilson had turned them back, and sent them on a bootless errand to the gaol‡ At last Hewitt appeared on the parade-ground, and, though too helpless to take the initiative himself, suffered Wilson to act for him. Placing himself at the head of the Artillery and some companies of the Rifles, Wilson marched for the Infantry lines But the sepoys had not failed to take advantage of the incompetence of their officers Only a few stray troopers remained near the lines, and even these easily found refuge in a wood, concealed in which they laughed at the efforts of the artillerymen to destroy them Then the British began a hunt in the dark for the mutineers Marching in breathless haste to their

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* The following is one of several instances recorded by Colonel Williams of the inconsistency so often remarked in the conduct of the native soldiers during the Mutiny —"A few days after the outbreak at Meerut, a small guard of the 8th Irregular Cavalry of their own accord and for greater safety, escorted the Office records and Treasure-chest in their charge from Meerut to Agra, fighting their way down, and, when attacked by insurgent villagers, beating them off with heavy loss They were well rewarded for their fidelity yet, in less than two months after, deserted almost to a man"

† Kaye, vol. ii p 65

‡ I have not seen it anywhere positively stated that Wilson gave this order, but Colonel Le Champion has written to me, "I have always heard it was Brigadier Wilson", and, as Hewitt expressly said to Le Champion, "I give no orders without Wilson's permission," I am sure that the statement in the text is true

own quarter of the station, they found only a few unarmed plunderers on whom to wreak their vengeance By that time great numbers of the mutineers were far on their way to Delhi Marvelling to find that they had escaped all reprisals, they never doubted, as they pressed on by the light of the moon, that the White Man, rousing himself from his lethargy, was pursuing, and would soon overwhelm them. With a religious zeal worthy of a better cause, they rushed straight to fancied martyrdom *

But they were never for a moment in danger Asserting that it was his duty to provide for the safety of the station of which he was Brigadier, Wilson left Delhi to perish because he dared not leave Meerut exposed to the attacks of the escaped convicts and the budmashes He forgot that one half of his British soldiers was sufficient for the permanent protection of the station, now freed from its most dangerous enemies, and that the other half, led by able officers, of whom there were some even at Meerut, would have been able to cut off the mutineers from their destination But there were at least two men who felt indignant that one of the strongest garrisons in India should have no thought for the safety of any station but its own Captain Rosser of the Dragoons offered to arrest the flight of the mutineers, if but one squadron of his regiment and a few guns were allowed to accompany him Lieutenant Moller of the 11th entreated Hewitt to allow him to ride to Delhi, and warn the authorities of their danger † These brave men were not suffered to retrieve the errors of their superiors

The baffled Europeans bivouacked on their parade-ground, but did nothing to help the suffering people for whose protection they had been retained, though the sullen roar of a thousand fires lighting up the darkness of the night might have warned them to be up and doing It was not to them but to a few faithful natives that those who were saved owed their lives Greathed, the Commissioner, and his wife had fled to the roof of their house on the first sound of tumult, but their furniture

* Mead, p 102

† "Had your offer been accepted,' wrote Sir H Durand "the siege of Delhi, and the massacres that occurred, would, in my opinion, never have taken place" Yet Moller received no reward, no official recognition whatever

was set on fire by a band of ruffians,* and they must soon have perished but for the devotion of one of their servants, Golab Khan While they expected every moment to be destroyed by the flames, this man, pretending that he could point out their hiding-place, decoyed away their enemies, and thus gave them time to escape † Not less heroic was the self-sacrifice of Craigie's troopers, who posting themselves outside his bungalow, protected his wife from the attacks of a savage mob But when daylight revealed the grim charred skeletons of what had been neat bungalows, the heaps of property wantonly destroyed, and the mutilated corpses, the soldiers, though they burned to be avenged upon the ruffians who had wrought this destruction, were forbidden by their officers to stir Not all, however, were paralysed by this effeminate weakness Lieutenant Moller, resolving to execute justice upon the murderer of a brother officer's wife, sought and obtained evidence of his identity, tracked, arrested, and carried him back to cantonments single-handed, and then delivered him over to the judgment of a drum-head court-martial, by whose sentence he was summarily hanged

Thus even Meerut had its heroes The negligence which had permitted the great disaster, the apathy which had made no effort to retrieve it, were half redeemed by the promptitude of Clarke and Craigie, the daring of Rosser, the gallant self-sacrifice of Golab Khan, the chivalrous courage of the faithful troopers of the 3rd, the swift vengeance of stern Lieutenant Möller

Delhi

On the morning of the 11th the sun which exposed the nakedness and desolation of the wrecked station of Meerut was shining gloriously upon the gorgeous mosques and palaces of Delhi The great city wore its usual aspect The traders were chaffering with their voluble customers The civil authorities were patiently listening to suitors,

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* Greathed's *Letters written during the Siege of Delhi*, App ii p 291

† An Afghan pensioner, named Syud Meer Khan, also risked his life in endeavouring to repel a mob which had collected round the Commissioner's house His account of his own exploits is so exquisitely comic that I cannot resist the pleasure of quoting from it "The mob appearing" he deposed, "I attacked them with great ferocity like a terrible lion By the favour of God I fought many actions with the mutineers The above is but a short account of my doings if I were to detail them it would be immense"—*Depositions, &c*, pp 17–8

of the prisoners in cutcherry. The officers were preparing for breakfast after morning parade, in happy ignorance of what had happened the night before Even the sepoys, though emissaries from Meerut had come among them on the previous afternoon, masked their feelings so cleverly that only a few penetrating eyes could see anything unusual in their demeanour. Suddenly the civil authorities were startled at their work by messengers who reported that a line of horsemen had been seen galloping along the high road from Meerut Not at once realising the whole import of the news, they nevertheless lost no time in acting upon it The magistrate galloped to the cantonments, and put Graves, the Brigadier, upon his guard, while another civilian hurried off to warn Lieutenant Willoughby, the chief officer of the great magazine, to look to the safety of his charge. Meanwhile, however, the rebel horsemen, followed by some of the infantry, had made good their entrance into Delhi. Some, after fording the Jumna a little below the city, had first burst open the gaol, and released the prisoners The foremost of the main body rode straight for the palace, and, surging round its walls, clamoured fiercely for admittance, boasting that they had already slaughtered the English at Meerut, and crying, "Help, O King! we pray for assistance in our fight for the faith." In vain Captain Douglas, the commandant of the palace guards, came out upon the balcony, and called down to them that their King desired them to depart Unable to force an entrance where they were, they made for the Rajghat gate, which was thrown open to them by a Mahometan rabble, and then, with these new allies in their train, rushed back towards the point from which they had started, firing every European dwelling, and murdering every European inhabitant upon their route, while the citizens shut up their shops in terror, and trembled as they thought of the retribution which the English would exact for such wickedness * On returning to the palace, the mutineers were joined by the guards and the King's dependents, to whose loyalty Douglas and Fraser, the Commissioner, were fruitlessly appealing, their once dreaded voices drowned by the insolent shouts of the multitude Falling back before the advancing crowd, Douglas leaped into the moat, and, wounded cruelly by his fall, was carried by some natives into

* Kaye, vol ii p 77

the palace, but Fraser reached the Lahore gate* unhurt, and, while his injured friend was being taken up to his apartments, remained himself in the court below, and made a last effort to control the furious mob who were pressing into it While he was speaking, a lapidary cut him down some of the guards despatched him, and the rest, rushing upstairs, smashed open the door, and massacred the collector, the chaplain, his daughter, and a lady who was staying with him, and the helpless Douglas Soon the rest of the Meerut infantry arrived, and joined the murderers, while another party of troopers, who had just come up, finding what their comrades had achieved, and eager to rival their exploits, went off to the Dariao Gunge, to work their will upon the Eurasian† Christians and poorer Europeans who lived in that quarter of the city ‡ Some were slaughtered on the spot, others, who had barricaded themselves in houses, or fled to the river side, were soon overpowered, and thrown into a room beneath the palace After being confined for five days in this dark and pestilential dungeon, ill-fed and constantly insulted, but defying their tormentors to the last, they were dragged out to execution,§ and their bodies flung into the river

May 16

Meanwhile another gang of mutineers had chosen for their operations the portion of the city in which the chief public buildings were situated Here the teachers in the Government colleges were slain in the midst of their work || the manager of the bank was cut down with his wife after a gallant defence in which she had supported him the missionaries, European and native, were murdered without distinction, and the compositors at the Delhi Press, who had just finished printing special editions of the *Gazette*, announcing the crisis of which they were themselves to be the victims, fell at their posts Here too the church was foully desecrated In the telegraph office hard by a young signaller was standing,

May 11

* Of the palace, not the city

† Eurasian—a person born of a European father and an Indian mother

‡ Cave-Browne, vol i pp 58-61, 63, 65-6, Evidence taken before the Court appointed for the Trial of the King of Delhi, pp 73, 76, 79, 89, 92, see also Kaye, vol ii p 79, note

§ A Mrs Aldwell and her three children saved their lives by pretending to be Mahometans —Evidence taken before the Court appointed for the Trial of the King of Delhi, p 93

|| Cave Browne, vol. i p 67

w[illegible] hand upon the signalling apparatus The mutineers were [illegible]ost upon him, and more and more plainly he heard them yelli[illegible] they swept along Still he went on with his work Click[illegible]ck, sounded the instrument Flashed up the wires to Umb[illegible]a, to Lahore, to Rawul Pindee, and to Peshawur, this mess[illegible] warned the authorities of the Punjaub,—"The sepoys have [illegible] in from Meerut, and are burning everything Mr Tod[illegible]ead, and, we hear, several Europeans We must shut up" [illegible]e mutineers burst in the last click died away, and, in [illegible]formance of his duty, the signaller was slain *

B[illegible] these things took place, the Brigadier had acted upon the i[illegible]ation which he had received, feeling sure that the Eng[illegible]giments from Meerut would soon come to his support [illegible]e cantonments, in which the bulk of his force was pos[illegible]e situated upon a high ridge, about two miles north-wes[illegible] city Colonel Ripley of the 54th, leaving a portion of hi[illegible]ment to escort two guns which were to follow him und[illegible]tain de Teissier, marched with the remainder towards the [illegible]ere gate, the nearest entrance to the city He had jus[illegible]d the main-guard near the gate, where a detachment of [illegible] *under Captain Wallace was on duty*, when he found hi[illegible] disputed by the troopers of the 3rd Cavalry Wallac[illegible]d his men to fire upon the mutineers, but they insol[illegible]fused The troopers fired their pistols at the officers of [illegible], six of whom fell dead The 54th did indeed fire at [illegible]d of command, but only into the air, and then, bayonet[illegible]ir own colonel, joined the 38th and the cavalry When the [illegible]erers heard that De Teissier's guns were coming down, th[illegible]ed and fled The guns, on their arrival, were placed at [illegible]in-guard, while Wallace, who had galloped back to has[illegible]eir advance, rode on, after he had met them, to beg for [illegible]r succours A few companies of the 38th, the 74th, and [illegible]dful of artillerymen formed the whole of the Brigadi[illegible]orce Not a man of the 38th responded to Wallace's app[illegible]ut, when Major Abbott, who commanded the 74th, cal[illegible]on his men to prove their loyalty, they came forward in[illegible]y, and demanded to be led against the mutineers †

[illegible]Browne, pp 67–8, 91, *Punjaub Mutiny Report*, p 57, par 14

[illegible]all who were present, about 240 The rest were distributed in de[illegible]nts over cantonments

Taking them at their word, he marched them down with two more guns to strengthen the main-guard He and his countrymen whom he had left behind at cantonments had still an afternoon of terrible anxiety to live through The Brigadier and his officers, wondering why no succours came from Meerut, laboured manfully to keep their mutinous men in check, and placed the women and children and their servants for safety in a building known as the Flagstaff Tower There, huddled together in a room smaller than the Black Hole of Calcutta, was collected a great company of every age and class, frightened children crying and clinging to their not less frightened ayahs, women bewailing the deaths of their husbands or brothers, others bravely bearing up against heat, and discomfort, and anxiety, and busily unfastening cartridges for the men At last, when the agony of waiting for help became insupportable, a young Englishman offered to ride to Meerut for reinforcements, but he had only gone a little way when he was shot by the men of the 38th on guard at the powder magazine Then Dr Batson of the 74th started on the same errand, disguised as a native but he too was fired upon, and escaped, only to be robbed and stripped by the villagers * There is no reason to suppose, however, that, even if these brave men had succeeded in reaching Meerut, their devotion would have shamed the authorities into action

Meanwhile the officers at the main-guard were keeping watch over their men, knowing nothing of what was passing elsewhere, except what they could gather from the stray fugitives who from time to time joined them Only the distant roar in the great city suggested to their imaginations the horrors that were being wrought within its walls

While the two parties at the main-guard and at cantonments were in this suspense, both were startled by the sound of a tremendous explosion, and, looking towards the city, saw a cloud of white smoke, followed by a coronal of red dust, rising into the air † They knew that the great magazine had been blown up Was it accident or design? Presently two artillery subalterns came into the main-guard, and told the story.

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* Cave-Browne, vol i pp 68–9 71, 73–4, *Times*, Aug 18, 1857, p 8, cols 4, 5

† Cave-Browne, vol i p 83

Warned of the approach of the mutineers, Lieutenant Willoughby had lost no time in sending to the Brigadier for help The young officer well knew that the possession of his magazine, with its vast stores of ammunition, would be eagerly coveted by the mutineers, and that, standing as it did close to the palace, it must be an early object of attack He could not trust his native guards, and he had only eight Europeans* to support him, but he could depend upon these for any sacrifice, and he could depend upon himself For, though chance acquaintances saw in him only a shy, refined, boyish-looking subaltern, his friends knew that, in the cause of duty, he would face any danger † No help came in answer to his appeal the suffering and the glory of that day were for him and his gallant eight alone His dispositions were soon made Barricading the outer gates of the magazine, he placed guns inside them, and assigned to each man his post But what if defence should fail? He had another plan in reserve A train was laid from the powder store to a tree standing in the yard of the magazine. There stood conductor Scully, who had volunteered to fire the train whenever his chief should give the signal If the enemy broke into the stronghold, they should find death, not plunder within For a time, however, the enemy seemed to hesitate. It was because they and their King feared the vengeance of the white troops from Meerut ‡ But at last the King's scouts told him that no white troops were coming Then he gathered confidence to demand the surrender of the magazine The garrison did not even answer the summons, and, when the multitude no longer hesitated to advance, opened fire upon them from every gun The most daring of the assailants planted ladders against the walls, and came swarming in, but the guns served with incredible swiftness, though the gunners were exposed to a fearful musketry fire, poured round after round of grape into their midst Yet so great were their numbers the survivors, strengthened by the native guards, who had treacherously joined them, must soon have overpowered the little band of Englishmen Still Willoughby hoped on.

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* Lieutenants Forrest and Raynor, Conductors Buckley, Shaw, and Scully, Sub-Conductor Crow, and Sergeants Edwards and Stewart

† [illegible] *Pamphlet*, p 41

‡ This is stated solely on the authority of Cave-Browne, vol. i. p 77, and Rotton [illegible].

He had defended his magazine for three hours, and he would still defend it against any odds if only reinforcements were coming Running to the river bastion, he bent over for a last look towards Meerut No English were to be seen Then, resolving that, though his countrymen had failed him, he would be true to himself, he gave the fatal order to Conductor Buckley Buckley raised his hat as a signal, and Scully fired the train In a moment more than a thousand rebels were blown into the air, while many more without were struck down by flying splinters of shot and shell Lieutenants Forrest and Raynor, Conductors Buckley and Shaw, and Sergeant Stewart lived to wear the Victoria Cross but Scully died where he fell, too cruelly wounded to escape, and Willoughby only survived to be murdered on his way to Meerut *

3 30 P M

At the sound of the explosion the mutinous sepoys flung off every remnant of disguise The natives of all classes believed that the King had turned against the English, and his followers, assured that the day had come for the restoration of the Mogul Empire and the revived supremacy of Islam, were burning with the lust of plunder and the more terrible passion of religious fanaticism Suddenly the 38th at the main-guard fired a volley at their officers Three fell dead Two of the survivors rushed up to the bastion of the main-guard, and jumped down thirty feet into the ditch below The rest were following, when, hearing the shrieks of the women in the guard-room, they ran back under a storm of bullets to rescue them The women were shuddering as they looked down the steep bank, and asking each other whether it would be possible to descend, when a round shot, whizzing over their heads, warned them not to hesitate Fastening their belts and handkerchiefs together, the officers let themselves down, and then, having helped the women to follow, carried them with desperate struggles up the opposite side † Meanwhile at the Flagstaff Tower, though the men of the 74th who had remained behind

* Cave-Browne, vol i pp 75-9 Evidence taken before the Court appointed for the Trial of the King of Delhi, pp 76-7 It is stated in the *History of the Siege of Delhi*, by an Officer who served there (p 38), that "Scully was killed, when trying to escape, by a sowar"

† Cave-Browne, vol i p 80, Evidence taken before the Court appointed for the Trial of the King of Delhi, p 95

continued respectful, those of the 38th were becoming every minute more insolent At last an officer suggested that it was time to retreat The Brigadier was indignant. He could not abandon his post, he said But the sun was fast sinking, there was no prospect of succour, and there was nothing to be gained by remaining At last the Brigadier gave way Accordingly the women and children and a few of the officers got into their carriages and drove down the hill towards cantonments The sepoys marched obediently for a few minutes, but, once in cantonments, they began to disperse, hinting to their officers that they had better make haste if they wanted to save themselves The fugitives could see their deserted bungalows already on fire * Then began that piteous flight, the first of many such incidents which hardened the hearts of the British to inflict a terrible revenge, not more for the physical sufferings of their kindred than for their humiliation by an inferior race Driven to hide in jungles or [illegible] from despicable vagrants, robbed, and scourged, and [illegible]ked by villagers who had entrapped them with promises of help, scorched by the blazing sun, blistered by burning [illegible], half-drowned in rivers which they had to ford or swim across, naked, weary, and starving, they wandered on, while some fell dead by the wayside, and others, unable to move further, were abandoned by their sorrowing friends to die on the [illegible].† But some, who reached at last a haven of refuge, had [illegible]ll of genuine acts of kindness shown to them in their distress by the subject people ‡

The outbreak at Meerut was soon seized upon by an unerring instinct as the real starting point of the Indian Mutiny, for the [illegible]ness of Hewitt and of Wilson allowed the mutineers to seize the imperial city of India with its inexhaustible munitions of war and to enlist the influence of the Mogul's name on their side, [illegible] thus yielded to them an immense moral and material

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* [illegible]tive of Mr Le Bas (Judge of Delhi) in *Fraser's Magazine*, Feb 18[illegible] 186-8

† [illegible]r from an officer of the 38th N I to the *Times*, Aug 6, 1857, p [illegible] 4 See also numerous other letters and pamphlets written by sur[illegible]

‡ [illegible]e Mahometan villagers distinguished themselves by their cruelty [illegible]e were protected and kindly treated for weeks by Hindoo villagers" —[illegible]y *of the Siege of Delhi*, by an Officer who served there, p 40 See also [illegible] Batson's narrative, *Times*, Aug 18, 1857, p 3, cols 4, 5.

advantage at the very outset of their operations Now that they had proved their strength, they could confidently appeal to the discontented who had hitherto longed but feared to rebel. It is impossible to do more than conjecture whether, if the outbreak at Meerut had been crushed, the Indian Mutiny would have been nipped in the bud Perhaps, if there had been a Nicholson at Meerut to annihilate the mutinous regiments, the whole Bengal army might have taken warning by their fate But it may be that their passions, having been so long allowed to gather strength, could not at that late hour have been at once extinguished, but would have only smouldered on for a time, to burst forth thereafter with still more awful fury It may even be that nothing short of a mutiny could have awakened the rulers to a sense of their shortcomings

On the 12th of May Canning, perhaps uneasily conscious of the popular verdict upon his treatment of mutineers, declared in a minute that that treatment had not been too mild * On the very same day a telegram from Agra announced the outbreak at Meerut Dorin tried at first to disbelieve a report which suggested so rude a comment upon the policy in which he had concurred But further details kept coming in, and the main facts of the risings at Meerut and Delhi were known on the 14th Like the lightning-flash, which makes itself seen even by closed eyes, the great disaster penetrated the mental blindness of the Government Men looked anxiously to see how they would act upon their knowledge, and tried to combat their distrust of the ruler to whom they felt that loyalty was due

Action of Canning

When Canning heard the news, he thought of what Gillespie had done with his dragoons at Vellore, and asked indignantly why the powerful European force at Meerut had tamely suffered such a disaster † For, though he had not yet learned to spurn the feeble counsels of his advisers, his spirit was never for a moment cowed by the blow Yet, though he might fairly complain of the false economy that had weakened the strength of the British force in India, it was his own fault that so few British regiments were immediately available If he had formed an accurate

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* *Parl Papers*, vol xxx (1857), p 253, inc 8 in No 14.
† Kaye, vol i p 597.

diagnosis of the events which had passed at Berhampore, at Barrackpore, and at Umballah, he would long ago have summoned to his aid the regiments whose tardy arrival he was now forced to await Even those who would not blame him for having lacked a foresight which only a great statesman would have displayed, will hardly defend him if it can be shown that he neglected to avail himself of the resources that lay ready to his hand Of this neglect he was guilty He allowed the 84th to remain inactive at Barrackpore for eight days after he heard of the outbreak at Meerut, though ever since the 6th of May it had been disengaged Nor was this all On the 17th he received a telegram from Lord Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay, containing an offer to send a fast steamer with despatches to England but he saw no reason for authorising such irregular energy Fortunately, however, the successful conclusion of the Persian war had set free a considerable body of troops who were now on their way back to Bombay These he ordered to be sent on instantly to Calcutta At the same time he ordered the 43rd, and the 1st Madras Fusiliers to be kept ready for embarkation at the southern Presidency, despatched a steamer to fetch the 35th from Pegu, telegraphed to Colvin, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, to order John Lawrence to send down every available Sikh and European soldier from the Punjaub to Delhi, begged the Governor of Ceylon to send him as many men as he could spare, and took upon himself the responsibility of diverting from its course an army which was then on its way to punish the insolence of the Chinese Government Contemporary journalists and pamphleteers were loud in asserting that he ought not to have the sole credit, which was surely not very great, of the idea of sending for reinforcements*, but the suggestions of others had nothing to do with his determination He gave his two most trusted lieutenants, Henry and John Lawrence, full authority to act as they might think best in Oude and the Punjaub Finally, to supplement his material resources by a moral stimulus, he empowered commanding officers to reward on the spot native soldiers who might perform distinguished acts of loyalty, and at last issued

May 14

May 16

May 19

* Mead, p 80

that reassuring order to the sepoy army on the subject of its religion and its caste which Birch had long ago recommended, but against which the Adjutant-General had successfully pleaded But the order was issued too late Had it been published before, and preceded by the condign punishment of the Barrackpore mutineers, it might have done some good The effect which it actually produced upon those whom it was meant to conciliate was shown by a proclamation which the King of Delhi in his turn issued, towards the end of May "If the infidels now become mild," said he, "it is merely an expedient to save their lives"*

May 16

On the same day on which the Governor-General heard the first vague rumour of the great disaster, a clear though incomplete statement of the main facts reached the Commander-in-Chief at Simla He was in poor health at the time, and was looking forward to a shooting excursion in the hills Naturally, therefore, he could not at first bring himself to believe the whole truth of the announcement Still he could not entirely ignore it The European troops at his disposal were indeed few, he had no heavy guns at hand to batter down the walls of Delhi, and he complained of a 'sad deficiency of ammunition But he did not make that prompt use of his slender materials which would have doubled their value At first he contented himself with sending an order to Kussowlie for the 75th Regiment to march thence to Umballah, and to the Company's European regiments at Sobathoo and Dugshai to hold themselves in readiness to march

May 12
Action of General Anson, the Commander in Chief

Next day, however, becoming more alive to the magnitude of the danger, he directed the last-named regiments actually to put themselves in motion, and the Sirmoor battalion of Goorkahs to move down from Dehra to Meerut Seeing the paramount necessity of securing the great magazines in the Punjaub, he warned the commandants of those at Ferozepore, Govindgurh, and Phillour to be on their guard Finally, he ordered a siege-train to be made ready at Phillour, and directed the Nusseree battalion of Goorkahs and a detachment of the 9th Irregular Cavalry to prepare to escort it to Umballah

May 13.

But he did not himself stir from Simla till the following day.

* Mead, p 108

From Umballah, which he reached on the 15th, he wrote to the Governor-General, complaining of the insurmountable obstacles which the want of transport, of ammunition, and of siege-artillery threw in his way. And in truth he hardly overrated his difficulties He had had little more than a year's experience of Indian life when he was called upon to face a crisis far greater than that which, eight years before, had tested the mettle of a Napier His departmental officers, unable to extricate themselves from the clogging processes of routine in which they had been educated, gave him no support With provoking unanimity the Quarter-master-General, the Adjutant-General, the Commissary-General, and the head of the Medical Department told him that the tasks he had set them were impossible While he could thus get small encouragement from those around him, he saw no cheering signs in the distant outlook He could not hope for aid from the native regiments in the Punjaub He might, however, at least have disarmed the native regiments at Umballah, and thus have set himself free for an immediate march on Delhi John Lawrence implored him to take this obvious step But he listened to the remonstrances of the Umballah officers, who told him that they had guaranteed their men against the shame of being disarmed, and would not hearken to the counsels of the Chief Commissioner It was in vain that the latter pointed out to him that the sepoys' repeated acts of disobedience had absolved him from the duty of observing their officers' pledges He resolved to trust men who had shown themselves unworthy of trust, and thought to bind them to loyalty by proclaiming the resolve of Government to respect their religion It was no time for proclamations *

May 14

His difficulties

May 19

There were two men, however, whose unconquerable energy was all this time supporting the weakness of Anson, and making up for the failures of the Departments. No sooner had Forsyth, the Deputy-Commissioner at Umballah, received the news from Delhi than he despatched a message to warn his Chief, George Barnes, the Commis-

Barnes and Forsyth support him

May 12

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* Cave-Browne, vol i pp 189, 193-4, 203, 208, *Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, May, 1857, *Parl Papers*, vol xliv, Part 3, pp. 200-1, Kaye, vol ii, p 141.

sioner of the Cis-Sutlej States, who was then at Kussowlie, and hastened to make all necessary arrangements in his absence. First he organised a body of Sikh police to protect Umballah Then he proceeded to organise a system for the defence of the whole of the Cis-Sutlej States Fortunately the means of defence were independent of the sluggish motions of department-governed battalions In the wide district between the Sutlej and the Jumna were a number of Sikh chieftains, whose ancestors many years before had sought and obtained the protection of the English against the encroachments of Runjeet Sing In anticipation of the Commissioner's sanction, Forsyth applied for help to the Rajahs of Puttiala and of Jheend The Rajah of Puttiala promptly sent a body of troops to Thanesur, to keep open the road to Kurnaul, where the troops from Umballah were to assemble, while the Rajah of Jheend, who, on hearing the news from Delhi, had voluntarily sent to Umballah to ask for instructions, hastened, at Barnes's request, to Kurnaul, to protect that station, and thus preserve an unbroken communication between Umballah and Meerut * The Nabob of Kurnaul had already paved the way for the coming of the Rajah by exerting his influence in the cause of order Presenting himself before the chief civil authority at Kurnaul, he had said, "Sir, I have spent a sleepless night in meditating on the state of affairs I have decided to throw in my lot with yours My sword, my purse, and my followers are at your disposal" Thus early the more sagacious of the natives foresaw the ultimate triumph of the British

Loyalty of Cis Sutlej chiefs

Meanwhile Barnes himself, who had reached Umballah on the night of the 13th, was actively suppressing the disaffection which had followed swiftly upon the events at Meerut and Delhi, posting guards at the fords of the Jumna, and sending out the contingents of the native rajahs and jagheerdars to maintain order in the districts. When the success of these precautionary measures was apparent, he and his lieutenant began to collect carriage and stores for Anson's troops, to make up for the shortcomings of the commissariat Their energy carried all before it, though the natives of every class, bankers,

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* Cave-Browne, vol i pp. 190-1, *Punjaub Mutiny Report*, p 85, par 7, p 97, par 9 This document is to be found in *Parl Papers*, vol. xviii. (1859)

tradesmen, contractors, and coolies, tried to keep aloof, fearing the downfall of the English Raj *

While, however, the labours of the civilians were removing most of his difficulties, Anson was suddenly disquieted afresh by the news that the Nusseree Goorkahs, complaining that, while they had been ordered to undertake a distant service, their pay had been allowed to fall into arrear and no provision had been made for the safety of their families, had mutinied near Simla. The English inhabitants, dreading the same fate that had befallen their brethren at Meerut and Delhi, had fled headlong from the station, women screaming to their servants to carry their children faster out of danger, men offering bribes to the bearers to carry their baggage and leave the children to shift for themselves. The Goorkahs, however, were simply out of temper with the English, and had no thought of touching a hair of their heads. Anson entrusted Captain Briggs, an officer who thoroughly knew the temper of the hill-tribes, with the work of bringing the mutineers to reason. Feeling that it was necessary to conciliate them at all costs, as, while their defection lasted, the siege-train must remain idle at Phillour, he restored them to good-humour by granting their demands and offering a free pardon to all. Then, ashamed of their groundless panic, the fugitives returned to their homes.

Panic at Simla

May 16

While his forces were moving down, Anson was discussing the plan of his campaign with John Lawrence. He tried to convince him of the imprudence of risking an advance against Delhi with so small a force as he could command. His idea was to concentrate his whole force between the Sutlej and the Jumna, and, permitting the fire of rebellion to burn itself out within these limits, to wait until the arrival of reinforcements should enable him to quench it once for all.† But the sagacity of Lawrence discerned the paramount necessity of striking a swift and staggering blow at

Correspondence of Anson with Canning and John Lawrence

May 17

* Cave Browne, vol i pp 192-3, *Punjaub Mutiny Report*, pp 86-7, pars 12-8, p 97, par 15

† Extract from an unpublished memoir by Colonel Baird Smith, quoted by Kaye, vol ii p 149, note. See also Bosworth Smith's *Life of Lord Lawrence* vol ii. p. 28

Delhi The instinct of the mutineers had seized upon the imperial city as the head-centre of revolt, the possession of which would give a national dignity to their cause The instincts of the Governor-General and of the Chief Commissioner told them that the one counter-stroke that could restore the shattered dignity of their rule would be the recovery of this stronghold. They were prepared to sacrifice everything to this grand object It was only natural that, in their eagerness and their ignorance of military affairs, they should underrate the difficulties which the Commander-in-Chief complained of Lawrence said bluntly

May 21

but good-humouredly that he could see nothing in the organisation of the Departments to prevent their working effectively, but that, at the worst, the army might surely march for so great a stake with three or four days' provisions in their knapsacks, and trust for further supplies to the people of the country Canning even

May 31

went so far as to demand that Anson should take Delhi with a part of his force, and detach the remainder to overawe the districts between Delhi and Cawnpore

Overruled by the commands of his chief, but sorely doubting his ability to fulfil them, Anson had already made up his mind to march against Delhi Weakened though he was by sickness, tortured by anxiety, he strove, like a good and faithful servant of the State, to push forward his preparations * But, before he could begin his march, it was necessary that he should communicate with the general at Meerut, and it was believed that the road from Kurnaul to Meerut was in possession of

Hodson's ride

mutineers In this extremity, William Hodson, a lieutenant of the Company's 1st Fusiliers, begged to be allowed to open a passage to the distant station Anson, who saw the difficulties of the undertaking, but did not fully appreciate the union of reckless daring and calm judgment which characterised Hodson, withheld his consent for a time but the resolute subaltern prevailed at last, and, on the 20th of May, started from Kurnaul with a message for Hewitt "Hodson is at Umballah, I know," said an officer at Meerut, "and I'll bet he will force his way through and open communications with the Commander-in-Chief and ourselves" The officer knew his man In seventy-two hours, having ridden

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* See an article by Sir Henry Norman in the *Fortnightly Review* for April 1883, pp 542-3

a hundred and fifty-two miles through an enemy's country, delivered his message, and obtained all the required information, Hodson returned to Kurnaul Hurrying on in the mail-cart, he presented himself within another four hours before his chief at Umballah * Now that he had acquired the information for which he had waited, Anson drew up his plan of campaign, and recorded it in a despatch which he wrote for the instruction of General Hewitt He intended, he said, to assemble his army at Kurnaul, to march thence on the 1st of June, to enter Baghput on the 5th, to await there the arrival of Hewitt with his contingent from Meerut, and then to advance to the attack of Delhi But he was not suffered to execute even the first stage of his design. Sending on the main body of his troops before him, he followed with the last batch on the 25th of May Two days later he was lying dead of cholera at Kurnaul

Anson's plan of campaign. May 24

May 27 His death

General Sir Henry Barnard, who succeeded him in the command of the Delhi force, made a generous effort to refute the charge of incompetence which men had begun to bring against him but he only half succeeded, for the late Commander-in-Chief had lived long enough to set his mark upon Indian history, and he had left no mark He had indeed many of the qualities that go to make a general But his warmest panegyrists have not been able to convince Englishmen that he was one of the heroes of the Mutiny, for they felt that neither his heart nor his head were great enough for the crisis, and they knew that there were one or two giants in India who would have dashed down even the obstacles that beset *his* path †

His character

Resolved that at least he would not incur the charge of delay,

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* *Twelve Years of a Soldier's Life in India*, by the Rev G H Hodson, pp 187–9, Cave-Browne, vol i p 220

† "*It is the feeling of all here*," wrote Robert *Montgomery to* Secretary Edmonstone, "that it would be a good thing were he (Anson) in Calcutta. A man like Chamberlain, Edwardes, or Nicholson would have been in Delhi a week ago" In another letter he wrote, "Why the force does not move on is not apparent Private letters from officers at Kurnaul express great indignation at the delay"—*Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, May, 1857

In the *Fortnightly Review* for April, 1883, pp 541–4, Sir Henry Norman argues that Anson did the best that could have been done under the circumstances, but, in my judgment, he only succeeds in proving what no one has ever denied, viz that Anson did *his* best The fact is that the difficulties

which had been the great crime of his predecessor in the eyes of the Government, Barnard made up his mind to march at once to join Wilson, instead of waiting for the siege-train, and then, after making his communications with Meerut and the Punjaub sure, to concentrate his whole force under the walls of Delhi

General Barnard marches for Delhi

May 31

His men at least never doubted that, within a few hours of their arrival at most, they would establish themselves within those walls Strong in this assurance they marched on, bearing up resolutely against the lassitude engendered by the fierce May sun But even contempt for their enemies sustained them less powerfully than the furious desire to be avenged upon the murderers of the women and children of their nation Many cruel deeds were wrought upon that march on villagers suspected of complicity in the ill-usage of the fugitives from Delhi Officers, as they went to sit on courts-martial, swore that they would hang their prisoners, guilty or innocent, and, if anyone dared to lift up his voice against such indiscriminate vengeance, he was instantly silenced by the clamours of his angry comrades Prisoners, condemned to death after a hasty trial, were mocked and tortured by ignorant privates before their execution, while educated officers looked on and approved *

Though nearly three weeks had passed away since the outbreak at Meerut, the force that was marching thence to join Barnard had only just shaken itself free from inaction Yet the most strenuous action had been required The released convicts, pour-

The British at Meerut

Anarchy in the districts

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that beset Anson were so great that only a man of genius could have overcome them, and Anson was not a man of genius His letters, when compared with those of John Lawrence, would leave upon most readers an impression of want of power Moreover, two definite and grave charges may be brought against him No one will contend that, in refusing to disarm the mutinous sepoys at Umballah, he did not commit a grievous error, and, judging after the event, we may say that he made a mistake in waiting so long as he did for the siege train Sir Henry indeed says (p 541), "Had General Anson hurried on to Delhi it is quite certain that he would have reached there without an efficient force, and that, hurry as he might exactly the same force would have been found at Delhi to resist him as that which opposed General Barnard, and gave our troops so much trouble on the 8th of June" True, but if he had waited even longer than he did, his force would still have been incomplete, and the moral effect of a speedy advance would have been incalculable

* *History of the Siege of Delhi*, by an Officer who served there, pp 59, 60.

ing from Meerut into the surrounding country, had told the story of the outbreak as they passed from village to village The villagers, hearing that the sepoy regiments had mutinied, and believing that on those regiments the power of the Feringhees depended, relapsed into the anarchy which had prevailed in the good old times The Goojurs, though they had lived from their youth up under a Government that enforced obedience to the law, robbed and outraged everyone upon whom they could lay their hands, with an aptitude which could only be explained on the theory that with them the propensity to crime was an inherited quality Villagers took down their matchlocks, swords, and spears, and fought with one another about landmarks which had been defined at the beginning of the century.* Murder, rapine, and wanton destruction went unpunished Highwaymen robbed travellers, and plundered the mail-bags Then came the news from Delhi to increase the exultation of the evil-doers and the terror of the English Still, Hewitt made no attempt to re-establish his authority, or to support the district officers He did indeed rouse himself so far as to join with Greathed in proclaiming martial law, *but, as there was no Neill at Meerut to make the law dreaded,* the proclamation remained a dead letter It was not till the 24th of May, just a fortnight after the great outbreak, that a few dragoons were sent out to chastise plunderers It is true that there was no light cavalry for the work of scouring the country in such heat as then prevailed † But there were commanders in India who did not shrink from requiring even infantry to make forced marches for the destruction of mutineers, under the fiercest suns of that Indian summer, and the soldiers of Hewitt dreaded hardship as little as the soldiers of Havelock or of Nicholson The historian, however, has no need to rebuke the feebleness of the authorities at Meerut. The most scathing comment upon their inaction was the fact that, till those dragoons emerged from their seclusion, the natives had believed that not a single Englishman remained

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* *History of the Siege of Delhi*, by an Officer who served there, p 63, Williams's Memo, p 8, Depositions, p 11

† *Parl Papers*, vol xxx (1857), p 350, par 14 It was the fault of Hewitt that there was not Lieutenant Furnell, of the Mounted Police, had offered to lead out thirty-six volunteers, whom he had persuaded to serve as cavalry but the offer, gladly accepted at first, was afterwards coldly declined —Williams's Memo, p 19

alive in Meerut Yet more than a thousand soldiers were there, ready to go anywhere and do anything for their country There was wanting only a general to command them

The time, however, was at hand when their mettle was to be tested under the only general whose services were available The letter which Anson had written to Hewitt gave the signal for their departure from Meerut Chafing under their enforced inaction, they had long impatiently expected that signal, and on the 27th of May, the day of their Commander-in-Chief's death, they set out in high spirits for Delhi, with Brigadier Wilson at their head

Battles on the Hindun

Three days afterwards they arrived at the village of Ghazee-ood-deen-nuggur About a mile in front of it ran the river Hindun, which was here spanned by an iron suspension bridge On a high ridge on the opposite bank of the river the mutineers, who had advanced confidently from Delhi to dispute the progress of their assailants, were observed strongly posted At four o'clock in the afternoon they opened fire from their heavy guns Wilson lost no time in sending a company of the Rifles to hold the bridge, which formed the key of his position Lieutenant Light and his men replied vigorously with their eighteen pounders to the enemy's challenge Meanwhile Colonel Mackenzie and Major Tombs advanced with their horse artillery along the bank of the river, dashed down its rugged banks, crossed it, regardless of the quicksands that lay concealed in its bed, and turned the enemy's left flank The mutineers, who had served a long apprenticeship under British artillerymen, worked their guns with admirable precision until their fire was silenced by Tombs's troop Then, as they were beginning to give way, the Rifles were let loose upon them, and drove them in utter rout from their position, while Colonel Custance pursued them with his dragoons

May 30

The British encamped that night upon the field which they had won The next morning was Whitsunday Hardly was the burial-service for those who had fallen on the previous day completed, when the mutineers, who, on their return to Delhi, had been bitterly taunted for their defeat, and sent out with reinforcements to try their luck once more, appeared on the opposite bank of the river, and opened fire from the distance of about a mile on Wilson's advanced picquet, which was posted about a mile in front of the bridge The Rifles were instantly sent to secure this impor-

May 31

tant position, while the horse artillery under Tombs, supported by a squadron of dragoons, advanced to return the enemy's fire, and again won the admiration of all who saw them. Their gallant leader had two horses shot under him, and of his fifty men thirteen were killed or wounded, but not for a moment did the troop cease its action, and, supported by Light, it gradually forced the enemy to slacken his fire. Then a general advance of all arms routed the wavering foe: but he was able to carry off all his guns, and almost all his ammunition to Delhi; for the British soldiers, parched with thirst, and fainting after the toil of a battle fought under a burning sun, were physically unable to follow up their victory.* Still the victory was decisive. Wilson had done something to retrieve his tarnished reputation,† and he and his men had fairly earned the right to share in the attack upon Delhi.

On the day after the second battle the conquerors were reinforced by Reid's Sirmooree Goorkahs, who had pushed their way southwards to Bolundshuhr, contributed to the tranquillisation of the country by inflicting a signal punishment upon the insurgent population of that village, and thence hastened on to overtake Wilson. The army remained upon the field of Ghazee-ood-deen-nuggur, waiting for instructions from Barnard, till the 4th of June, when an order came to march to Aleepore. Thither Barnard arrived upon the 5th, and there, two days later, Wilson joined him. The siege-train had come in safely the day before from Phillour, after many hair-breadth escapes. On the night of its arrival Barnard's staff were anxiously debating as to the position which the mutineers might have taken up to make their final stand. Unless the point could be ascertained, the General would have nothing to guide him in making his preparations for an attack. In this emergency Hodson sallied forth with a few sowars, and, riding right up to the Delhi race-course, made a careful reconnaissance, returned to camp at day-break, and presented his report.‡

June 1. Wilson joins Barnard.

June 7.

June 6.

June 7.

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* Greathed, pp. 12–14; *Parl. Papers*, vol. xxx (1857), pp. 612–16.

† It should be mentioned, however, that Nicholson wrote in a letter to John Lawrence, "By all accounts he (Wilson) was driven into fighting at the Hindun, and could not help himself."—Bosworth Smith's *Life of Lord Lawrence*, vol. ii, p. 207.

‡ Cave-Browne, vol. i, pp. 316–7.

The mutineers were strongly posted about five miles northwest of Delhi at Budlee-ka-serai, a group of buildings protected on the right by an impassable water-course, and on the left by the Nujufghur jheel canal * Thus secure from an attack on either side, they had posted guns to defend the front of their position Seeing the impossibility of making a flank attack upon his enemy, Barnard resolved to send his infantry and light field-pieces along either side of the main road to attack the serai, while the heavy guns were to advance for their support upon the road itself Colonel Hope Grant, with the cavalry and two troops of horse-artillery, was to move across the canal, between Budlee-ka-serai and Delhi, and then, recrossing, hurl his force upon the left rear of the mutineers

In the evening of that day it was known in the camp that a battle was to be fought on the morrow The hearts of the soldiers, as they passed the news from one to another, were almost consumed by the rising fire of their passions Even the sick rose painfully from their beds, and swore that they would remain in hospital no longer †

June 8 Battle of Budlee ka Serai

Before daybreak, Hope Grant led out his brigade, while the two infantry brigades under Colonel Showers and Brigadier Graves marched straight for Budlee-ka-serai Day was just dawning when Showers's men, who had advanced to within a short distance of the serai, were startled by a sudden fire from the enemy's guns The British field-pieces swiftly replied but Graves's column, impeded by a mass of baggage-carts, which had been allowed to block up the way, was still two miles in the rear, and the mutineers, working their heavy guns with precision, began to overpower their opponents Then Barnard, seeing that the batteries must be taken at any cost, ordered the 75th to charge Shouting fiercely, the soldiers rushed up to the serai, while the 1st Bengal Fusiliers hastened to their support but the mutineers, unappalled, fought bravely for their guns, and fell beside them, asking for no quarter By this time the men of the other column had come up, and, splashing through water which reached up to their knees, forced the left of the position. The rebels, unable to hold their ground, were re-

* Cave-Browne, vol i p 318

† *History of the Siege of Delhi*, by an Officer who served there, p 73

treating steadily towards Delhi, when Hope Grant, suddenly appearing, hurled his lancers upon them, the horse-artillery assailed them with a terrible flanking fire, and their orderly retreat was changed into a precipitate rout

The victors were fearfully exhausted, but still eager for more blood; and Barnard resolved to follow up his success, lest the enemy should have time to rally and stop his advance About half a mile beyond the serai the main road split into two branches Along the left branch, leading to the cantonments, Barnard and Graves marched with part of the force, while the remainder, under Wilson, was sent along the other towards the city. The mutineers were soon discovered, strongly posted on the Ridge The entire British army was too small to make a front attack upon the whole length of their position, but it was intended that the two divisions, falling upon either flank, should reunite in the centre, while Reid with his Goorkahs was attacking in front The left column was harassed in its advance by a heavy fire from a battery which the enemy had established at the Flagstaff Tower, the extreme end of his position but it held on resolutely, and now Graves was triumphantly leading his men into the cantonments from which, just four weeks before, he had been expelled by his own troops Presently Wilson's column came up, having fought its way under a still more galling fire directed against it from the cover of walls and gardens along its route Then the exhausted troops lay down to rest and eat a mouthful of food · but the tents were not yet pitched when the enemy, emerging from the city, opened a fresh fire The Goorkahs, the Rifles, the Fusiliers, and some of the 75th had to rouse themselves to repel the attack, and it was not till five o'clock, after sixteen hours' marching and fighting, that the victorious army laid its weapons aside *

The British loss had been severe but the victory was worth the price paid for it, for the enemy had sustained the third and bloodiest of their defeats, they had been forced to surrender to their conqueror a commanding position from which he could attack them to the greatest advantage while keeping open his communications with the sources of his supplies and expected reinforcements, and they had been driven igno-

* *Blackwood's Magazine*, Jan 1858—Article, The First Bengal European Fusiliers in the Delhi Campaign, pp 123-4, *Parl Papers*, vol xxx (1857), pp 618-20, Cave-Browne, vol. i p 321

miniously by a force far smaller than their own to take refuge within the walls of the city from which they had but lately expelled every Christian inhabitant whom they had not destroyed

The British encamp before Delhi

The sun was still high above the west horizon · but the fierce heat of the day had spent itself, and the soldiers, as they stood upon the Ridge, had leisure to look down upon a scene of glorious beauty Right in front of them lay the imperial city of India The long line of wall that fenced it in was broken at intervals by massive gates and bastions half hidden by clumps of trees Straight across the city within ran the broad Chandnee Chouk, fringed by rows of trees, and here and there, above the labyrinth of streets and lanes on either side, stately houses and graceful mosques gleamed in the sun On the left, in the midst of a fair garden, rose the lofty red walls and round towers of the palace which Shah Jehan had reared, and on an island to the north of it, the old towers of Selimgurh frowned down upon the blue sparkling waters of the Jumna In the centre of the city, high above all, soared the swelling white marble domes and tall minarets of the Jumma Musjid, and far away to the south, in the midst of a vast sandy waste strewn with the ruins of old Delhi, rose the gigantic Minar of Kootub *

Exhausted though they were, the British lay down to rest with light hearts, for they did not know how many weary weeks they were to spend outside the walls which they had boasted that they would overpass on the day of their arrival

* *History of the Siege of Delhi*, by an Officer who served there, pp 81–2, Medley's *A Year's Campaigning in India*, pp 43, 45, Turnbull's *Sketches of Delhi*, Forrest's *Picturesque Tour along the Rivers Ganges and Jumna*, Roberts's *Hindostan*, vol i pp 68, 72 86

CHAPTER IV.

THE NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES, GWALIOR AND RAJPOOTANA.*

The North-Western Provinces

BEFORE the glad tidings of the victory at Budlee-ka-serai had been despatched from the British camp, the effects of the outbreak at Meerut had begun to develop themselves through the length and breadth of the North-Western Provinces The peasant population of this extensive region, who had suffered grievously under the consuming tyranny of the Mahrattas, had gone on steadily prospering since the introduction of British rule, but the great landowners had been humiliated and exasperated by the levelling action of the modern revenue system. Moreover, even the poorer classes, though their material welfare had been so improved, disliked and suspected the educational measures of their new masters, abused their civil procedure, complained that the native magistrates and police whom they appointed were unfit to be trusted with power, and bitterly resented their protection of the hateful bunyah† in his extortion High and low alike were irritated by the interference of the Government with their customs, and groaned under the steady pressure of its taxation ‡ Thus, when the storm broke, sagacious adminis-

* The Saugor and Nerbudda Territories, though subject to the Lieutenant Governor of the North-Western Provinces, are not referred to in this chapter, as the plan of the work requires that they should be dealt with later on. Similarly Meerut and Delhi, Benares and Allahabad, and Cawnpore are treated of in separate chapters

† Grain-dealer or money-lender

‡ Raikes's *Notes on the Revolt in the North-Western Provinces*, p 7; *Report on the Administration of Public Affairs in the N W P for* 1857-58, pp 6, 7

trators feared that the strain would be too great for the loyalty of the people Their anxiety must have been increased when they reflected that a single regiment and battery at Agra, and the dishonoured troops at Meerut formed the only European force whose aid they could command In that crisis, however, the personal character of a ruler was a graver consideration than the number of troops at his disposal

The ruler of the North-Western Provinces was Lieutenant-Governor John Colvin With a mind that could master the minutest administrative details,* he was esteemed as an able civil officer, a kind friend, a conscientious, brave, Christian gentleman Yet, with all his gifts of intellect and graces of character, he lacked that robust self-reliance, that unswerving decision, which enabled many men far inferior to him in other respects to pass triumphantly through the ordeal of the Indian Mutiny Many said that his faith in his own judgment had been shattered when the great disaster of 1841 had exposed the hollowness of the policy which, as Lord Auckland's trusted secretary, he was believed to have advised † Be this, however, as it may, it is certain that some of those who best loved John Colvin regarded him as unfit for the responsible post which he held in 1857

John Colvin

The head-quarters of the Government of the North-Western Provinces were at Agra This city, which is situated on the right bank of the Jumna, a hundred and thirty-nine miles from Delhi, was perhaps the richest of all the cities of India in specimens of the noble architecture of the Moguls In the midst of a desolate expanse near the left bank was a mausoleum, which the beautiful Empress, Nour Mahal, erected over the body of her father It was from the minarets of this edifice that the most comprehensive view of the city might be obtained The blue, rippling waters of the river, over which bright-plumaged birds hovered and skimmed, flowed past over smooth sands On the opposite bank, close to the water's edge, stood the marble palace of Shah Jehan, its pinnacles and turrets glittering in the sun, and reflected in the

Agra

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par 32, Robertson's *District Duties during the Revolt*, pp 132-7 Thornhill's *Adventures of a Magistrate during the Indian Mutiny*, pp 87, 114-5

* *Letters of Indophilus to the Times* (3rd edn), pp 53-4

† According to the *Friend of India*, Sept. 24, 1857, Colvin always disclaimed all responsibility in the matter of the Afghan war

clear stream the three white domes and the gilded spires of the Pearl Mosque peeped out above the grim, red walls of the fort: the bastioned walls and gateways of the city were partly hidden by the foliage of many trees, and the eye, as it wandered over the various features of the panorama, was riveted at last by the domes and minarets of the Taj Mehal On the landward side of the fort stretched the cantonments and the civil station, in the latter of which stood the residence of the Lieutenant-Governor *

The news from Meerut reached him on the 11th of May Alarmed by a false report, which said that the mutineers were on their way from Delhi to Agra, he summoned a representative council of the civil and military officers, clergymen, and Europeans of every class, to discuss the state of affairs The council met on the 13th. Colvin's own idea, he said, was to abandon the station, and retire within the fort This proposal was met by a storm of remonstrances, and it soon became clear that the Lieutenant-Governor had no real power over his multitude of counsellors. The meeting was as stormy as that of a French Assembly Some officers actually rushed uninvited into the room, to ask for instructions, or offer advice Everyone had his own theory as to the way in which the crisis should be met At last it was agreed that the best policy would be to secure the fort without betraying any fear, raise a corps of volunteers, and appoint a parade of the troops for the following morning The parade was accordingly held, and Colvin himself came down to address the men Turning first to the English soldiers, he begged them not to distrust their native comrades, but added with unhappy impulsiveness, "The rascals at Delhi have killed a clergyman's daughter, and, if you have to meet them in the field, you will not forget this" The men looked as if they would like to fire a volley at the sepoys there and then Passing to the latter, Colvin assured them of his sincere confidence in their loyalty, and offered to listen to any complaints which they might wish to make. Prompted by their officers to cheer, they uttered a yell, and looked with a devilish scowl at the Europeans

Policy of Colvin

Mar 14

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* Roberts's *Scenes and Characteristics of Hindostan*, vol ii pp. 306-7; Roberts's *Hindostan, its Landscapes, &c*, vol. ii pp 25-6, Hunter's *Imperial Gazetteer*, vol. i pp 53-4.

Colvin was deaf to that threatening yell, and blind to that devilish scowl He did not err for lack of sound advice. Colonel Fraser, the Chief Engineer, implored him to remove the non-combatants into the fort, and to secure the property of the Government and of private individuals within its walls while there was yet time But, since the meeting of the previous day, Colvin had suffered himself to be persuaded that there was no real danger, and in the third week of May he sent a series of telegrams to Canning, assuring him that the worst would soon be over Still he knew that, though it might be easy to weather the storm, the pilot could not afford to be wholly inactive He therefore resolved to apply to Sindia and the Rajah of Bhurtpore for the help of their Mahratta and Jat troops, believing that the mutiny had been set on foot by the Court of Delhi, and would be effectually opposed by the two races who were the hereditary enemies of the Mogul Both princes made haste to prove their loyalty, and Colvin, cheered by Canning's hearty assurances of support, and strengthened by his bestowal of full powers, looked confidently forward to the restoration of order *

May 15, 16

Soon, however, news arrived from Allygurh, which disturbed his serenity. For a week, indeed, after the story of the Meerut outbreak had reached them, the detachment of the 9th Native Infantry which garrisoned that station showed no sign of disloyalty, and even delivered up to justice a Brahmin who had formed a plot for the murder of the British officers But on the evening of the 20th, when the conspirator had just been hanged in the presence of the paraded troops, a sepoy pointed to the quivering body, and exclaimed to his comrades, "Behold a martyr to our religion" The appeal at once kindled their smouldering passions into flame They did not indeed lay violent hands upon their officers, but they drove them away, and went themselves to join the rebels at Delhi The result of this mutiny was not simply the loss of an important station. It stopped the communication between Meerut and Agra, and set an example which was speedily followed by other detachments of the 9th at Bolundshuhr, Etawah, and Mynpoorie. Meanwhile a panic had arisen at

May 21
Mutinies in the Doab

May 23

* *Parl Papers*, vol xxx (1857), pp 220-1, 228, 236; Raikes, pp 1, 9-12.

Agra Carts loaded with women, children, furniture, beds, and bedding were to be seen rattling into the fort, carriages and foot passengers swarming along the roads to a large building which had been appointed as a place of refuge, timid citizens running for their lives to their houses, screaming, as they went, that the mutineers were crossing the bridge Every Englishman carried a sword or a revolver One civilian was observed to turn ghastly pale, and was overheard warning his underlings to save their lives as best they could.* The only unclouded faces were those of the young officers, who bathed, and rode, and played billiards as merrily as ever It was for the Lieutenant-Governor to set an example of dignified courage alike to the timid and to the careless, to recognise the danger, and to take measures for repelling it He, however, was not yet convinced of the seriousness of the crisis Persuaded that the great majority of the Bengal army would return to their duty, if once they were assured that they would be leniently dealt with, he took upon himself the responsibility of issuing a proclamation, which he intended to be understood as offering forgiveness to all who would give up their arms, except those who had maliciously instigated revolt, or taken part in the murder of Europeans The proclamation, however, was so loosely worded that Canning, fearing that it might open a door of escape to many who deserved punishment, ordered his lieutenant to rescind it, and publish in its place a more explicit document which he had himself drawn up But, though the incident gave rise to much controversy at the time, it is of slight historical importance, for neither proclamation had the smallest effect in quelling mutiny. The sepoys would not have appreciated forgiveness until they had been taught to fear punishment This was clearly demonstrated only five days after the issue of Colvin's proclamation On the 30th of May the garrison of Muttra rose, and on the following morning the detachment which the Rajah of Bhurtpore had sent in answer to Colvin's appeal, and by the aid of which it had been intended to intercept the Muttra mutineers on their way to Delhi, followed their example and drove their officers away †

Colvin's proclamation May 25

May 31

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* Kaye, vol. iii pp 227-8

† *Parl. Papers*, vol. xxx (1857), pp 370-3, 475-8, Mead, p 148, Raikes, 14-5

On the preceding night the news of the mutiny at Muttra had reached the ears of Robert Drummond, the Magistrate of Agra. This officer had gained a decided ascendency over the mind of the Lieutenant-Governor, whose proposal to withdraw within the fort he had strenuously combated, while insisting upon the necessity of showing confidence in the loyalty of the sepoys. Since he had given this advice, however, a series of mutinies had proved it worthless. Moreover, though Agra itself had remained comparatively quiet, nightly fires and secret meetings proved that there, as elsewhere, the poison was working in the sepoys' minds. The English had been living in the misery of suspense. Day after day the judges had been forced to take their seats upon the bench, and listen, with distracted attention, to tedious arguments, which, they had good cause to fear, would soon be settled by violence rather than law. All meanwhile had begun to see in the weak impulsiveness with which their chief gave orders only to countermand them, evidences of an instability of character which disqualified him to rule in troublous times. Drummond therefore hastened to rouse him from his sleep, and, after telling his story, urged that the time had come for disarming the native regiments at Agra. At first Colvin hesitated but he soon yielded to the firmness of his subordinate. In the morning a general parade was held, and the sepoys were deprived of their arms. The English at Agra could breathe freely once more.*

May 30

Drummond

Disarming at Agra

May 31

Meanwhile Colvin had been doing his best to recover his hold upon the stations which he had lost. Several detachments of the Gwalior Contingent went forth from Agra to pacify the country but, though they did good service for a time, the sight of the villagers rising in revolt and every sign of British authority fading away throughout the districts which they traversed, was a test too strong for their loyalty, and soon one after another rose in rebellion. Moreover, though a portion of the Agra volunteers, acting as cavalry, performed enough to show that some vitality was left in the British power, they were not numerous enough to hold the villagers in

Colvin's efforts to restore order

May 26

* Raikes, pp 18-9, 38-9

check; and, after the mutiny of the Gwalior Contingent, even the most resolute of them were obliged to fall back on the capital

Far more sad, however, than the tales of mutiny and rebellion which grieved the Lieutenant-Governor was the report that, at a distant station, a British officer had turned his back upon the subject people Some distance to the north of Meerut lay the station of Mozuffernuggur, where a few sepoys, belonging to one of the regiments that had mutinied at Meerut, were posted for the protection of the treasury It was hardly to be expected that they would remain quiet a moment after the news from Meerut should reach them They did so, however, until the civil population set them an example of rebellion And that the civil population rebelled was directly owing to the miserable cowardice of the magistrate, Berford, who, not content with closing the public offices as soon as he heard of the mutiny at Meerut, and thus practically confessing the overthrow of British authority, actually withdrew the sepoys whose duty it was to guard the gaol, for the protection of his own life It is not improbable that those shrewd judges of character felt that their new charge was less valuable than the one from which they had just been withdrawn Anyhow they, as well as the townspeople and the villagers, showed their agreement with the magistrate's estimate of his own power of rule by entering upon a course of indiscriminate plunder But at the more northerly station of Saharunpore there were worthier representatives of the British power There the magistrate, Spankie, and his colleague, Dundas Robertson, though they had only a few hundred sepoys and policemen of doubtful loyalty to control a notoriously disaffected population of over a million, and, though the rising which Berford's pusillanimity had encouraged, increased their difficulties, resolved never to acknowledge that their authority could be overthrown Knowing that the existence of the empire hung, in a manner, upon their conduct, for with the safety of Saharunpore was bound up that of the neighbouring district of Roorkhee, from which alone could be drawn a large portion of the siege material indispensable for the reduction of Delhi, they set out into the district to collect the revenue as calmly as in the most peaceful times, led their half-hearted sepoys against the insurgent villagers, and, when mutiny at last

Mozuffernuggur

May 14.

Saharunpore

June 2.

broke out, still continued with the aid of a body of Goorkahs, who had been sent to their assistance, to assert their supremacy.*

June 3

Meanwhile the Lieutenant-Governor had hardly begun to congratulate himself upon the relief which the disarming of the native regiments had given to Agra before ominous news reached him from Rohilcund. At Shahjehanpore the sepoys, after remaining comparatively quiet for a fortnight after the news from Meerut had reached them, rose on the 31st of May. Some of the English were slaughtered. Others, escaping through the disunion of the mutineers, fled across the frontier into Oude, and besought the Rajah of Powain to shelter them. He declared that he could not do so. Baffled and weary, but still clinging to the hope of life, the fugitives went on their way, and, after a day and night of untold hardships, reached Mohamdee in Oude. There they found another party of Europeans. Three days afterwards the whole body set out for Aurungabad, trusting to the solemn oaths of the native troops belonging to the station which they had just left, that they would not injure them. In mingled hope and fear they pressed on till they were close to their goal. Looking round, they saw the troops following close behind. Still they pushed on, fearing treachery, but not giving up hope till, when they were within half a mile of Aurungabad, their pursuers rushed forward and began to fire. The fugitives, of whom four were little children, collected under a tree, and the ladies, descending from a buggy in which they were travelling, calmly joined in prayer. That last service was soon over, for the murderers fell upon them, and in ten minutes all but two were lying dead, stripped of everything that they had on.†

Rohilcund

Shahjehanpore

June 1

June 4

June 5

It was at Bareilly, however, that the progress of affairs was most anxiously awaited, for this town was not only the capital of Rohilcund, but also the seat of the Commissioner and the head-quarters of three native regiments. Long before the outbreak at Meerut, the story of the lascar of Dum-Dum had found its way thither and caused excitement among the sepoys; but, even as late as the close of

Bareilly

* Robertson.

† Kaye, vol. iii. p. 281; Gubbins, pp. 123-5.

th[illegible] week in May, the Brigadier wrote to Colvin, express-in[illegible]ief in their loyalty His second in command, Colonel C[illegible]up, shared his confidence Till the 29th all went we[illegible] the morning of that day Troup heard that the two in[illegible]egiments were going to rise within a few hours The re[illegible] regiment, the 8th Irregular Cavalry, was accordingly or[illegible] get under arms The men obeyed the order with th[illegible]t apparent zeal, but no mutiny took place after all. Th[illegible] evening, however, Troup heard that even in the ranks o[illegible]regulars there were traitors But their commandant, C[illegible]Mackenzie, would not listen to a word in their dis-pa[illegible]ent He had done his duty towards them for years wi[illegible]rt and soul he was justly proud of their noble ap-pe[illegible] and their proved efficiency, and he could appeal to th[illegible]iness with which they had volunteered to go on service te[illegible] in 1852, and to their splendid conduct during the cam-p[illegible]as an irrefragable proof of their loyalty His confidence w[illegible]on to be tested On the morning of the 31st of May he w[illegible]formed by one of his native officers that the infantry r[illegible]ents were going to rise at once Only half believing the r[illegible], he nevertheless resolved to be on his guard He and [illegible]ficers had hardly put on their uniforms, when the brigade-[illegible] came rushing up to tell them that the mutiny had already [illegible]n. The words were only just spoken when the roar of a[illegible]lery and the reports of musketry were heard confirming t[illegible] truth Mackenzie instantly rode down to the lines to [illegible] out his men The right wing obeyed at once, but Mac-[illegible]ie, noticing that the troopers of the left wing were less [illegible]mpt, went among them in person, and was busy forming [illegible]n up, when suddenly he saw the right wing moving off [illegible]loping after them, he asked what the movement meant A [illegible]ve officer replied that Colonel Troup had ordered it The [illegible]wer was quite true Troup had given the order because he [illegible]w that there were traitors among the Irregulars, but it was [illegible] improbable that the rest might have obeyed Mackenzie, if [illegible]oup had not interfered As it was, when Mackenzie asked [illegible]ve to take the men back, and attempt the recovery of the [illegible]ns, Troup replied, "It is no use, but do as you like." It [illegible]as indeed too late Troup's unfortunate order had been the [illegible]rning point in the crisis Before Mackenzie had finished [illegible]lking, the senior native officer had ridden off the ground with [illegible]e left wing Perceiving their absence, but not at first under-

standing its cause, Mackenzie told the right wing that he was going to take them to recover the guns Riding at their head to the parade ground, he there found the left wing drawn up side by side with the mutinous infantry, rode up to them alone to try to win them back, and was apparently just going to succeed when some of the infantry, who had been looking on intently at the struggle of inclinations, as a last resource, summoned the troopers in the name of their religion to join them. The appeal was as magical in its effect as that of the Brahmin sepoy at Allygurh The left wing yielded to the temptation: the right wing followed their example, and Mackenzie, seeing that the day was lost, rode off with twenty-three faithful troopers, and, overtaking Troup, who had fled with the surviving Europeans, escaped with him to Nynee Tal *

Khan Bahadoor Khan

In Bareilly a pensioner of the British Government, named Khan Bahadoor Khan, was proclaimed Viceroy, and began his reign by ordering all the English upon whom he could lay his hands to be executed. But he could not kill their dauntless spirit One of them, dragged into his presence before he was taken to execution, proudly defied him to do his worst, and warned him that the worst he could do would not be able to hinder the British from overthrowing his usurped dominion †

June 1. Budaon

The loss of Bareilly soon made itself felt On the very next day the sepoys at Budaon mutinied, and William Edwards, the magistrate, who, without a single white man to bear him company, had held his ground so long as it had been possible to maintain even a show of authority over the disaffected population which surrounded him, was forced to fly for his life At Moradabad indeed, the bulk of the Native Infantry regiment, influenced by the master-spirit of the judge, Cracroft Wilson, whose strength of character was reluctantly acknowledged by the worst enemies of British rule, not only remained quiet during the fortnight that succeeded the outbreak at Meerut, but, on three distinct occasions, showed the most loyal zeal in checking the attacks of mutineers from other stations Before long, however, they too

Moradabad

May 18, 19, 28.

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* *Parl Papers*, vol xxx. (1857), pp 559–60, 633–6, Malleson's *Hist of the Indian Mutiny*, vol i pp 305–6, 312–14

† *Ib*, p 317, Kaye, vol. iii p 276

su[illegible]d to the contagion of rebellion in the surrounding co[illegible]nd the irresistible influence of the news that the regime[illegible] Bareilly had risen. On the 3rd of June they rose; and [illegible] English officials, after looking helplessly on at the pl[illegible] of the Government property, reluctantly withdrew fro[illegible] station which they had so hopefully and so valiantly de[illegible].*

[illegible]he loss of Moradabad, the downfall of British rule in Rohilcund was complete. Anarchy took its place; for the rule of Khan Bahadoor Khan was never universally acknowledged. Villagers attacked sepoys whenever they had a chance of success. Hi[illegible] were robbed and murdered by Mahometans. The Vi[illegible] himself, though he could not keep the peace, was strong en[illegible]o repress the Hindoo barons who disputed his power, an[illegible]ished their disobedience with merciless cruelty. Even in [illegible]lamation which he issued immediately after his usurpatio[illegible] gain over the Hindoos to his cause, he could not help be[illegible]g the innate Mahometan spirit of persecution, by th[illegible]ning to slaughter the kine of all who would not join him *in [illegible]minating the Christians.* Such a rule could not but be e[illegible]ed by all who were unable to protect themselves. For pl[illegible]r, confiscation, mutilation, and murder were everywhere ri[illegible]verywhere the strong preyed upon the weak; and all w[illegible]red for peace and security sighed for the restoration of th[illegible]itish power.

[illegible] district of Furruckabad still remains to be considered. Though belonging to the Agra Division, it was peopled by a race closely akin to the fierce Pathans of Rohilcund. The Mahometans were numerically a s[illegible] minority; but in no district of the North-Western Provi[illegible] were they more turbulent or more antagonistic to law and order as such. Many of them were of good family, and, mindful of the past glories of their ancestors, too proud to work and too poor not to welcome any opportunity of acquiring [illegible]es. Though, however, before the end of May the district [illegible] surging in rebellion, the 10th Native Infantry at the capital, Futtehgurh, without being wholly obedient, remained quiet [illegible]ger than any other corps in the Division. On the 16th of

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* *Narrative of the Escape of W. Edwards from Budaon to Cawnpore,* [illegible]1-6; *Narrative of the Mutiny at Moradabad.*

June, indeed, they informed their commanding officer, Colonel Smith, that they had been called upon by the 41st, who had lately risen at Seetapore in Oude, to murder their officers, and promised to fight for the Company, which had so long cared for them, against these mutineers Yet, only two days later, they told the Colonel that they would obey him no longer, and warned him to retire within the fort.

June 18.

He lost no time in following their advice A fortnight before, he had sent off about a hundred and seventy of his non-combatants to Cawnpore, to be out of the reach of danger Forty of these, however, had since returned, and now, with some thirty others who were unable to bear arms, and only thirty-three fighting men, took refuge in the asylum pointed out by the sepoys They had so little ammunition that they were obliged to collect screws, nuts, and bolts for grape Still the sepoys showed no signs of advancing to the attack. They had acknowledged the Nabob of Furruckabad as their ruler, but had refused to give him the Government treasure, which had fallen into their hands, and, when the 41st, who had arrived from Seetapore, demanded a share in the plunder, they too met with a rebuff Violent dissensions then broke out between the two regiments Most of the 10th escaped with their ill-gotten gains across the Ganges into Oude, and dispersed to their homes The rest were attacked by the 41st After many had fallen on both sides, the survivors agreed to join in an attack on the fort It was not, however, till the morning of the 27th of June, that they opened fire For several days their efforts were of no avail, for, as they were weaker than the garrison in artillery, they contented themselves with discharging their muskets from behind trees and bushes, and ever and anon bringing up ladders, which, in the face of the unerring fire directed against them, they were never able to plant against the walls. On the fifth day, however, finding all their efforts at escalade useless, they occupied a number of houses surrounding the fort, and from their roofs poured a deadly fire into its interior Still the garrison, though they now began to lose men fast, continued night and day to maintain a noble defence The women prayed without ceasing for their defenders Prominent among the men was the chaplain, Fisher, whose frank and manly nature endeared him to all, and who, like Walker of Londonderry, only relaxed his efforts to solace and encou-

Siege of Futtehgurh

June 27 or 28?

rage his people with the words of Christ, that he might join with them in repelling the enemy Yet even the unsurpassed courage of the garrison could only protract the unequal struggle. The enemy succeeded in exploding a mine under the fort, and, though they were twice hurled back from the breach which it had opened in the walls, they persevered, and began to sink another shaft Then Colonel Smith, seeing no hope of succour, and reflecting that his ammunition was fast failing, that many *of his best men had fallen, and that the survivors were worn* out by the sleepless labour of the defence, resolved to attempt an escape.

Three boats lay moored beneath the walls of the fort. Into these the garrison descended on the night of the 3rd of July By two o'clock all were in their places, and the boats, commanded respectively by Colonel Smith, Colonel Goldie, and Major Robertson, began to drop down the river But there was already light enough for the sepoys to see that their prey was escaping, and, with fierce yells, they started in pursuit. The current, however, carried the fugitives so swiftly away that their pursuers, stumbling along the uneven bank, could not gain upon them but presently Goldie's boat ran aground, and, while its occupants were being transferred to one of the others, the sepoys came hurrying up and opened fire. Meanwhile the two remaining boats had been again set in motion, and drifted on, pursued but still untouched, as far as the village of Singerampore There Robertson's boat also grounded; and the villagers, taking advantage of the accident, swarmed down to join in the attack. Then Major Munro, Captain Vibart, and Lieutenants Eckford, Henderson, and Sweetenham sprang ashore, charged up the bank, and drove the mob away Returning to the river, they found that every effort to push off Robertson's boat had failed, while the other had drifted far down the stream The poor people who were left behind were still wondering what was to become of them, when they saw two boats coming down the stream, full of sepoys who, as soon as they had got within range, poured a dreadful fire into their midst Then Robertson besought the ladies to leap into the river with their children, rather than fall into the hands of their inhuman enemies Many of them did so; and now their last agony began. Some were shot down by the sepoys or the swarms of rebel villagers. Others were taken prisoners, brought back to the Nabob, and

July 4, 2 A M

blown away from his guns Others were carried away by the swift river Robertson saw his wife torn from his grasp, and drowned, and only escaped himself to die two months afterwards of the wounds which he had received The gallant Fisher too saw his wife and child drowned in his arms. He and one other survivor, named Jones, alone succeeded in reaching Smith's boat Jones, who had been cruelly wounded, remained with some friendly villagers who offered him food and shelter The remainder found their last resting-place in the city of Cawnpore *

Meanwhile the Nabob had persuaded most of the native officials to take service under him, and had murdered every Christian upon whom he could lay his hands

Character of the mutinies and disturbances in the North Western Provinces

The mutiny at Futtehgurh sounded the knell of British rule in the Doab, the country between the Ganges and the Jumna The history of the Mutiny in that country and in Rohilcund is specially interesting, not only because it describes some of the most tragic scenes of that sad time, but also because it furnishes the most complete and important body of evidence for determining the nature of the purely military and the various other factors of the rising The hesitating demeanour of many of the mutineers, notably of the Irregulars at Bareilly, in the very midst of the crisis, the practical loyalty of others up to the very day of mutiny, a loyalty which cannot be satisfactorily accounted for on the theory of accomplished dissimulation, the fact that few detachments mutinied until the news that neighbouring detachments had committed themselves, or the infection of civil rebellion overcame their fidelity, and that sometimes a mere accident, like the exclamation of the fanatical sepoy at Allygurh, occasioned the outbreak, prove that, however skilful and elaborate may have been the attempts of the ringleaders to secure concerted action among their dupes, there was nothing like perfect organisation among the various sections of the mutineers even up to the time of mutiny, that is, even up to the completion of the first step only towards the attainment of their objects It is more than likely that, if we take into account as well the natural tendency of men thrown

* *Times*, Nov 3, 1857, p 7, col 1 and 2, Edwards's *Personal Adventures during the Indian Rebellion*, pp 134-5, *Parl Papers*, vol xliv. (1857-58) Part 1, p 286

together in large masses to fling off the restraints of law and order when once the *example of successful contempt* of authority has been set, the theory advanced by an intelligent Brahmin sepoy, in conversation with that able officer, Julius Medley of the Bengal Engineers, is the true one —"Sir, there is one knave, and nine fools, the knave compromises the others, and then tells them it is too late to draw back"

From the point of view of the historian, however, it is more important to learn how the civil population felt and acted during the Mutiny than to analyse the phenomena of the Mutiny itself It is hard for a reader unacquainted with the characteristics of Indian society to picture to himself the headlong violence with which the floods of anarchy swept over the North-Western Provinces when once mutiny had let them loose Neither the Hindoos nor the Mahometans generally regarded the English with any particular dislike they were ready to acknowledge the comparative justice and efficacy and the absolute benevolence of English rule but they were too ignorant to perceive that it was their interest to support it they knew nothing of the reserve force that was available to rescue it in case of danger, and therefore, when the defection of the sepoy army seemed to threaten it with destruction, they naturally relapsed into the turbulent habits of their ancestors, and prepared to make their profit out of the new order of things Bands of mutineers and hordes of escaped convicts roamed over the country, and incited the villagers to turn upon the Feringhees Rajahs emerged from their seclusion, gathered their retainers around them, and proclaimed their resolve to establish their authority, as vassals of the King of Delhi. Mobs of Mahometan fanatics unfurled their green flags, and shouted for the revival of the supremacy of Islam. Swarms of Goojurs, starting up on every side, and girding on their swords and bucklers, and shouldering their matchlocks, robbed the mail-carts, plundered peaceful villages, and murdered the villagers. Mobs of budmashes set fire to tehseels, and drove out the tehseeldars.* The native police, who had generally been recruited from the dangerous classes, and whom interest, not loyalty, had hitherto kept on the side of authority, felt that there was nothing to be gained by endeavouring to prop up a doomed

* Tehseeldar—the head native revenue officer of a pergunnah or "hun-

government, and threw in their lot with the evil doers. Dispossessed landowners, clutching at the opportunity for which they had long waited, gathered their old tenants together, hunted out the purse-proud upstarts who had bought up their estates, and triumphantly re-established themselves in their ancestral homes Insolvent debtors mobbed and slaughtered without pity the effeminate bunyahs, whose extortion they would have punished long before, but for their dread of the strong arm of the law Even the Hindoo villagers, who, with the exception of those with whom robbery was a hereditary calling, remained quietly in their homes, were not sorry to hear of the overthrow of a Government which they regarded merely as an irresistible engine for the collection of taxes Suttee and the other barbarous customs which benevolent rulers had abolished, were re-established The mass of the people enjoyed the excitement and the freedom of the time, and the English officials sadly confessed that their rule, notwithstanding all the good that it had effected, had taken no hold of popular sentiment How disastrous was the collapse of authority will be understood from the fact that public works, except those undertaken for military purposes, absolutely ceased, that surveys had to be suspended, that civil justice could only be administered in a few isolated and favoured spots, that education was either stopped, or frequently interrupted, and that in fact, with the exception of the administration of criminal justice and a partial collection of the revenue, the organism of Government was paralysed.

On the other hand, many of those who committed themselves to the cause of rebellion were actuated not by inclination, but by fear. Most of the talookdars were shrewd enough to perceive that it would not answer their purpose to join the rebels; and though of the whole body of influential landowners some unquestionably took an active part against us, a considerable number were passively loyal, and some few manfully threw themselves into the breach, and exerted their influence to stem the rush of insurrection. A fair proportion of native officials stood gallantly at their posts, some of them even giving their lives for the alien Government which paid them Those natives who had been taught English were generally, and those who had been converted to Christianity invariably loyal. Finally, with the exception of the hardened criminals, the professional robbers, and those who knew that the mercy of a long-suffering

Government could never be extended to them, even the insurgents themselves learned at last by bitter experience that the evils of anarchy outweighed its advantages, and hailed the British officers who came to re-establish authority, as deliverers *

Gwalior, Sindia, Dinkur Rao, and Macpherson.

While day after day heart-breaking tales of mutiny and massacre were reaching the ears of the Lieutenant-Governor, he was anxiously asking himself what course the native allies of the British would pursue Was it certain that Sindia's troops would not follow the example of the Bengal army? Was it even certain that Sindia would not himself stir them up to follow it? Had the Paramount Power done anything to attach him to its rule, or had it treated him with the insolence of a foreign conqueror? At the time when Ellenborough had been obliged to interfere in the affairs of Gwalior, Sindia had been too young to take his part in governing, but in 1852 the British Government declared his minority at an end, and appointed as his Dewan, or Prime Minister, a young pundit named Dinkur Rao, who was afterwards pronounced by the Political Agent to be the ablest and best of the natives of India. The Dewan indeed soon proved himself worthy of this high praise Within a few years he raised the people, by a series of great reforms, from the abject poverty to which a corrupt system of farming the taxes had reduced them, to a prosperity not inferior to that of the most flourishing districts under British rule For a time, however, his tenure of power was uncertain The young Maharajah was surrounded by a group of unprincipled courtiers, who hated Dinkur Rao for having deprived them of the corrupt sources of wealth which had lain open to them under the old system of revenue. Yield-

* Major Williams's *Narrative of Events connected with the Outbreak in 1857*, pp 6–9, 14, Robertson, pp 31, 48, Dunlop's *Service and Adventure with the Khakee Ressalah*, pp 69, 71, Raikes, pp 93, 139, 157–60, 175, note, *Report on the Administration of Public Affairs in the N W P for* 1857–58, pp. [illegible] par 23, 16, pars 64–6, *Parl Papers*, vol. xliv (1857–58), Part 3, pp. [illegible]05, par 11, 509, Keene's *Fifty-seven*, pp 41, 86, Thornhill, pp. 87, 11[illegible]; Hunter's *Imperial Gazetteer*, *passim* The great difficulty of accuracy [illegible] describing the conduct of the civil population during the Mutiny arises from the looseness with which many of the civil officers worded their reports For instance, they often stated broadly that "the villagers" were in rebellion, without attempting to estimate even approximately what proportion of them were peaceful Perhaps, however, accuracy was unattainable.

ing to their insidious whispers, Sindia dismissed his faithful minister, snatched up the reins of government with his weak and untrained hands, and within two years undid all the good that had been done, and threw all the affairs of State into the utmost confusion At last, however, it dawned upon him that he had made a mistake, and, of his own accord, he restored Dinkur Rao to office Meanwhile a new Political Agent, Major Charters Macpherson, had come to his court Macpherson was one of the noblest of those many noble officers who have led lives of hardship and danger, and courted premature death, in the cause of Indian civilisation, knowing all the while that their countrymen at home felt no interest in their doings or their sufferings He had laboured for years in a pestilential climate to persuade the hill-men of the Khond country to abandon the hideous rite of human sacrifice, and had at last succeeded And now he entered upon his new duties in the same devoted spirit Deeply sympathising with the natives of India, tolerant of, but never acquiescing in their sins, he was just the man to watch over the uncertain efforts of a native government to work out a sound administrative system for itself He wisely resolved not to interfere obtrusively, but, while ever holding himself ready with suggestion and advice, to encourage Sindia and the Minister to regard themselves as the responsible rulers. With Dinkur Rao his task was easy The Englishman and the Mahratta soon learned to know each other's worth, and there grew up between them the familiar intercourse that may subsist between able and high-minded men, however diverse their national characteristics may be But, while the Agent could regard the Dewan as a friend, towards the Maharajah he felt himself in the position of an anxious father, for he soon discerned that the young prince, though intelligent and well-intentioned, was unstable and impulsive. Gradually, however, Macpherson's tact and firmness prevailed over the influence of the courtiers, and, by the time that the Mutiny broke out, he had established his ascendency. It chanced, moreover, that, a few weeks before, Sindia had paid a visit to Calcutta; and, while he was strongly impressed by the evidences of British power which he saw there, he was gratified by Canning's assurance that the British Government would always continue to respect the independence of his dynasty.*

* Macpherson's *Memorials of Service in India*, pp 299, 301, 304, 307, 311.

When, therefore, the storm broke, Sindia, though he could discern the signs of the times well enough to foretell that the hold of the British upon India would be strained to the utmost, never doubted that they would eventually triumph, never hesitated to declare that his loyalty to them was unshaken. Macpherson saw that it would be his task to keep him steady to this resolve, and prevent the courtiers from working on his well-known love of military display by reminding him of the martial glories of his ancestors and tempting him to assert his family rights to the championship of the Mahratta people against the British intruders. There was, indeed, cause to fear that Sindia might listen to their suggestions. For almost the entire mass of his subjects were convinced that the knell of British supremacy had sounded. Presently, however, it became clear that the Agent's influence was gaining the day; for, while promptly responding to Colvin's request for the aid of the detachments from the Contingent, Sindia also sent the flower of his own army, his cherished body-guard, to protect Colvin's person. But that which most strongly impressed his people with the belief that he had resolved to side with the Paramount Power was his evident determination to be guided by the counsels of *his Minister, whom all knew to be a resolute opponent of the* rebellion.*

Folly of the Brigadier at Gwalior and of Colvin

Unfortunately, however, not everyone at Gwalior who wished as well to the British cause as the Minister saw so clearly how to serve it. Among the first questions which had to be decided was how to provide for the safety of the women and children. They were then living in cantonments at the mercy of the Contingent, of whose determination to mutiny Sindia, Dinkur Rao, and Macpherson were alike convinced. Sindia earnestly begged that they should be removed to the protection of the Residency; and, on the 28th of May, Brigadier Ramsay, the Commander of the Contingent, hearing that the troops in cantonments intended to rise that night, actually did remove them. In the course of the night they were transferred from the Residency to Sindia's palace. The Brigadier was annoyed on hearing of this†; and listening to the remonstrances of his native officers, who de-

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* Macpherson's *Memorials of Service in India*, pp. 310–12.
† *Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, 20 to 29 July, 1857, pp. 208, 2[illegible]

clared the original removal to be an insult to them and their men, and paying no heed to the warnings of those wiser than himself, ordered their return He was thus, though he knew it not, signing the death-warrant of many for whose lives he was responsible

Then began a period of intolerable suspense for these unhappy people They might perceive, but they could not remedy the insane credulity which had subjected them to a mental agony worse than that of a condemned criminal, for fear of wounding the sensitive honour of intending murderers One of them afterwards recorded this solemn recollection of the agony she had gone through —"the words, 'O death in life, the days that are no more,' kept recurring to my memory like a dirge" At last they were allowed to hope that they might be sent to Agra But the ray of comfort had hardly shone out before it was overclouded The Lieutenant-Governor telegraphed that they must remain at Gwalior until mutiny should break out there On the 14th of June they heard the sickening details of a massacre at Jhansi To many of them the news sounded like a prophecy That night the prophecy was fulfilled The nine o'clock gun had just been fired when a bugle sounded; and the sepoys poured out of their huts, and seized their muskets The officers hurried down to the lines but they could do nothing to restore order, and four of them were shot dead on the spot Warned by the reports of musketry, the crackling of flames, the shrill blasts of bugles, and the shriller shrieks that dinned upon their ears, the inmates of every European dwelling fled. The chaplain, with his wife and another lady, hid themselves in a garden Presently they heard loud shouts of brutal laughter a number of bayonets, gleaming in the moonlight, thrust aside the bushes behind which they lay concealed, and a mob of sepoys passed within arm's length of them They were still marvelling at their escape, when a faithful Mahometan servant discovered them, and took them to a hut close by. There they lay cowering all night Day had dawned brightly, and the birds were singing, when a number of sepoys rushed up, climbed on to the roof, and, tearing off the beams, fired down at them Choosing rather to die in the open air, they rushed outside Instantly the sepoys descended and surrounded them, and, when the ladies, with clasped hands, cried out for mercy, replied, "We will not kill the mem-sahibs,

June 12

Mutiny at Gwalior

only the sahib" Then the chaplain was hurried off his wretched wife was dragged, with two other ladies, into another hut close by, and in a few moments the sound of volley following volley told her that all was over But the Mahometan who had rescued her from the first outburst of the sepoys' fury watched over her, and escorted her to Agra, where, after enduring grievous hardships and cruel insults from the people of the country, she and the rest of the survivors found a refuge at last *

Macpherson persuades Sindia to keep his troops in active at Gwalior

Among those survivors was Macpherson. He, however, had not left Gwalior until he had achieved a political triumph without which India could hardly have been saved Narrowly escaping an attack from a stray party of Mahometan fanatics, he had made his way to the Maharajah's palace, and, before he left him, had persuaded him to use all his influence to detain the mutinous Contingent and his own army within the limits of Gwalior It was a signal illustration of the irresistible influence which an English gentleman of strong and elevated character can establish over the mind of a native For not only was it obviously for Sindia's immediate interest to rid himself of the rebellious soldiery, but he might fairly think that he had long ago done enough to prove his loyalty, and was now free to follow his own inclination Yet Macpherson was able to persuade him to undertake a task full of anxiety as well as of positive danger to himself, for the sole object of rendering harmless two powerful armies which must otherwise have gone to swell the numbers of the enemies of the British power In other words, he so wrought upon Sindia as to induce him to interpose his own person and power to parry a thrust aimed at the power which professed to protect him Yet the man who performed this transcendent service for his country was suffered to die without receiving any reward beyond a few words of official commendation †

Rajpootana.

Hitherto, in the North-Western Provinces, the course of events had signally falsified the confident anticipations as to the speedy termination of the revolt which Colvin had expressed to Canning in the middle of May There was one territory, however, not included within those

* *A Lady's Escape from Gwalior*, by Mrs Coopland pp. 113-44.
† Macpherson, pp 320-1.

provinces, but yet subject to his supervision, for the tranquillity of which he might reasonably have hoped This was the country of Rajpootana, comprising a number of native states, six of which were supervised by British political officers,* while all alike acknowledged the general control of an Agent appointed by the Governor-General The flat, uncultivated, and desolate expanse of this vast region was here and there relieved by spots of romantic beauty, and almost every hill was crowned by an old ruined castle, glorified by traditions of some gallant feat of arms performed against the Mahometan invaders of a past age, who had never been able to reduce the high-spirited Rajpoots to complete subjection † In 1857 the descendants of these patriots had for nearly forty years been under British protection, and were the better able to appreciate the blessings which it had conferred upon them, because they had not yet forgotten what their fathers had suffered at the hands of the Mussulman, the Mahratta, and the Pindharie. On the other hand, some of the Rajahs were on such bad terms with their nobles, the thakoors, that they were not in a position to render efficient support to the Paramount Power in case of need These very thakoors too hated and feared the Paramount Power because, in its character of guardian of the public peace, it had restrained them from bullying their Rajahs, and it seemed certain that, if mutiny were to break out in the army which formed the chief strength of the Government, and compel it to relax the grip of its restraining hand, their hatred would prove stronger than their fear ‡

George Lawrence

The Governor-General's Agent was Colonel George St Patrick Lawrence, a gallant, straight-forward, hard-headed cavalry officer, who, in the course of a most adventurous service of thirty-six years, during the latter part of which he filled a succession of responsible political offices, had given evidence of a strong good sense and a solid ability which had raised him, like his more gifted younger brothers, to the headship of a great province. He was living at the summer station of Mount Aboo when the news of the outbreak at Meerut reached him He took in the whole political situation, so far as it

May 19

* Pritchard, p 6

† *Ib* pp 8, 9

‡ *Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*

affected him, at a glance He was responsible for the safety of a country more than a hundred and thirty thousand square miles in extent, and, though the relations of its inhabitants with the British had not been such as to predispose them to revolt, there was danger in the presence among them of five thousand sepoys, whose inevitable disloyalty there were no British soldiers to check *

His proclamation

May 23

Lawrence lost no time in proving to the native princes that he did not despair of the safety of the commonwealth Four days after the news from Meerut reached him, he issued a proclamation, calling upon them to keep the peace within their respective territories, and to hold their troops in readiness to assist the British Government His lieutenants ably seconded his efforts by inspiring the princes with the belief that it was their interest to support the power which protected them, and though the troops which they offered to furnish were as little to be trusted as the men of the Gwalior Contingent, the knowledge that they were themselves loyal had a reassuring influence upon the minds of their people †

He secures Ajmeer

Meanwhile Lawrence himself had another serious object in view In the heart of Rajpootana was an important stronghold called Ajmeer, belonging to the British This town was to Rajpootana what Delhi was to North-Western India It possessed a well-stored arsenal and a full treasury it was a venerated resort both for Mahometan and for Hindoo pilgrims, and within its walls was concentrated most of the wealth of the native merchants and bankers of Rajpootana. Lawrence foresaw that, if it were to fall into rebel hands, it would become a rallying point for all the enemies of order throughout the country Yet at that time its sole garrison consisted of a company of sepoys and a company of Mairs The latter, however, were hill-men, and on that account Lawrence believed that they would be unlikely to sympathise with the high-caste sepoys He therefore resolved to send another company to reinforce them, and displace the sepoys This delicate operation was entrusted to Lieutenant

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* Hunter's *Imperial Gazetteer*, vol vii p 508, Lawrence's *Reminiscences of Forty-three Years in India*, pp 278-9 MS. notes sent to me by Sir A. Lyall, K.C B.

† Lawrence, pp 279, 302-3

Carnell, who, making a forced night-march of thirty-seven miles from Beawur, the head-quarters of the Mair battalion, relieved the sepoys before they had time to mature any plans of resistance which they may have formed * Thus Ajmeer was saved, and with it the whole of Rajpootana

It was not, however, to be expected that there would be no isolated outbreaks. Within a few days after the reinforcement of Ajmeer, the troops at Nusseerabad and Neemuch, the two chief military stations under British occupation, mutinied, and, setting their faces towards Delhi, plundered villages, destroyed bungalows, and threw everything into confusion The Parsees and shop-keepers of Neemuch fell into an agony of alarm But the stations were almost immediately reoccupied by a mixed detachment of Europeans and Bombay sepoys, whom Lawrence had promptly summoned from Deesa Moreover, the Rajah of Joudpore placed at the disposal of Lawrence a body of troops, about two thousand of whom were sent in pursuit of the mutineers Lawrence himself, on hearing of the mutiny at Nusseerabad, had moved from Aboo to the more central position of Beawur He had noticed on his journey that the country was comparatively quiet, and, on his arrival, he did much to strengthen the confidence of the people in the vitality of the British power by assuming the office left vacant by the recent death of the Commissioner, Colonel Dixon, and carrying on judicial business in open court as calmly as in a time of profound peace †

Mutinies at Nusseerabad and Neemuch May 28 June 3

Thus, in a most critical period of the Mutiny, the Agent and his officers had, with utterly inadequate resources, upheld the authority of their Government, in spite of mutiny, over the vast territory of Rajpootana But, before the end of the month, the

* Lawrence, pp 279-80

† *Ibid.*, pp 281-3, *Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, Aug 1857, p 1025, 8 to 22 Oct. 1857, pp 591-2, 24 Dec 1857, pp 178, 343 It must not be supposed that the people were universally well affected An officer, writing on June 18 from Neemuch to the *Times* (Aug 6, 1857, p 6, col 1) said, "*The natives are very disrespectful, and are under the impression that our Government is at an end, and prayers are daily offered up in the mosques for the success of the King of Delhi*" Moreover, Captain Hardcastle, who accompanied the Joudpore troops, wrote, "At every station (in Jyepore) through which we passed, the inhabitants cursed and abused us as English The Jodhpore troops were taunted with . obeying us the whole of Jyepore is against us "—*Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, Aug 1857, pp 1032-3

mutineers whose malice they had disappointed were on their way to threaten Agra, and throw in their lot with the rebels who were harassing its distracted ruler.

Shortcomings of Colvin his miseries he tries to do his duty

Though the history of the Mutiny in the countries under Colvin's direction is brightened by many individual instances of political courage and personal heroism, yet, on the whole, it is a dismal record of failure For this failure Colvin was in part responsible It is true that, owing to the paucity of British troops and the evil effects of British legislation, his position was one of unexampled difficulty It is also true that, owing to the selfishness and faint-heartedness of Hewitt and of Wilson, the powerful force at Meerut did absolutely nothing to support him, and that his lieutenants did not all display the strong self-reliance which enabled Spankie and Dundas Robertson to maintain their hold upon a large and turbulent district. But, on the other hand, there were some high officials at that time who, though they were no better served than Colvin, yet, far from allowing themselves to be disheartened by the failure of erring subordinates, only laboured the more earnestly to inspire them with their own high courage and vigorous resolve, and made up for their want of material resources by acting as though they possessed them It is impossible indeed to affirm that the most resolute and clear-sighted of Indian statesmen could, if he had been placed in Colvin's position, have preserved entire tranquillity over the North-Western Provinces but it may confidently be affirmed that to Colvin's feebleness and political blindness was due the unprecedented anarchy which actually prevailed The truth was that from the outset his burden had been too heavy for him, and that, while he had grown weaker, it had grown heavier Day after day messages poured in upon him, telling how officers of high rank had been hunted out of their stations, and had fled into jungles, to save themselves from being murdered by men from whom they had been accustomed to receive the most servile obeisance, how ladies and little children had been put to a cruel death, or had escaped only to endure sufferings worse than death * He could

* "As to dishonour," wrote Robertson (pp 181–2), "so far from its not taking place, my investigations firmly convinced me that it was as a general rule the case whenever the prisoners were not too emaciated by hardships to become objects of passion, as—it may be thought fortunately—was almost always the case with those of pure European extraction."

not conceal from himself that all over the country the fabric of his Government was falling to pieces, and he bitterly complained that the results of years of conscientious labour had been undone within a few weeks by the very people for whose benefit it had been undergone But to a man of his kindly nature it was more bitter still to know that his countrymen were crying out for help, and that he could not help them. Yet, though he acknowledged that the misery which their sufferings caused him and the load of his responsibility were greater than he could bear, he continued resolutely to watch every detail of public business He would have served his country better by sparing himself this labour, and leaving room in his mind for larger views of state policy While Agra itself was now almost the only stronghold not submerged by the flood of insurrection, he continued, with unfortunate credulity, to entrust a share in its defence to the native police It was pointed out to him in vain that these pretended guards were in league with all the rebels in the district Drummond believed in their fidelity, and he had given himself up to Drummond's guidance *

He removes the women and children at Agra into the fort

Towards the end of June, however, he heard a report which would have startled the most apathetic of rulers into vigorous action It was said that the mutineers from Rajpootana were in full march upon Agra Hitherto he had refused to listen to the most urgent entreaties for the removal of the women and children into the fort Now, of course, he could refuse no longer Yet even now he forbade anyone to take into the fort more than a few indispensable articles of personal use, thus exposing much valuable property to the risk of being plundered and destroyed by the mutineers †

The provisional council.

Meanwhile it was necessary to consider what measures ought to be taken to repel the expected onslaught. Besides the European troops, there were available for defence a detachment furnished by the Rajpoot Rajah of Kotah and a small force commanded by a friendly native, the Nabob Syfoollah Khan It was decided to post the Kotah Contingent for the protection of the cantonments, and to send out Syfoollah Khan's

July 2.

* Raikes, pp 52–3, 56.

† Ib., p. 54.

levies, as a corps of observation, to the neighbouring village of Shahgunj The day after these arrangements had been made, Colvin's health broke down so completely that he was obliged to make over the Government to a provisional council. The council ordered a pontoon bridge over the Jumna, by which the rebels might have made their way into the town, to be destroyed On another question, however, a difficulty arose The loyalty of the Kotah Contingent was suspected The wisest course would have been to disarm them but Brigadier Polwhele, the military chief, could not make up his mind to order so strong a measure At last he agreed to test their loyalty by sending them out to attack the rebels Instead of attacking the rebels, however, they deserted to them The same night Syfoollah Khan reported that his men too were not to be trusted. He was therefore ordered to withdraw them out of harm's way to the neighbouring village of Kerowlee Early on the following morning Colonel Fraser called upon Polwhele, and begged him to bring matters to a crisis by marching out, and attacking the rebel army Polwhele at first refused. A few hours later, however, hearing that the rebel army was coming to attack him, he thought over Fraser's advice again Two courses lay open to him As he was not strong enough to defend the whole station against the vastly superior numbers of the enemy, he must either retire within the fort, or, boldly assuming the offensive, march out against them, and inflict upon them such a defeat as would deter them from even attempting an attack upon the station As a British officer, with eight hundred British soldiers under his command, Polwhele doubtless felt that the bolder would also be the more prudent alternative. He therefore lost no time in issuing orders for an advance.*

July 3

July 4.

July 5

Early in the afternoon the little army quitted the parade ground After a march of some three miles it came in sight of the enemy, who were posted in and behind a village called Sassiah, their guns, which had been placed on either flank, being protected by rising ground and clumps of trees Presently their left battery opened fire Polwhele immediately halted his men, and, ordering the infantry to lie down, directed the artillery, which was

Battle of Sassiah.

* Kaye, vol iii. pp. 378–83

divided into two half batteries, placed, like that of the enemy on either flank, to reply to the challenge The officers fought their guns like heroes but the enemy, sheltered as they were by natural breastworks, were too strong for them. Two tumbrils were blown up, and one of the guns on the left was dismounted At length the officers, finding that their ammunition was running short, implored Polwhele to order a general advance There were the infantry, chafing under their enforced inaction, burning to be allowed to rise and hurl themselves upon the rebels But Polwhele, unnerved by a morbid fear of diminishing the scanty numbers of the defenders of Agra, could not resolve to give the required order A general of ordinary good sense would have seen that the object for which he had come out to fight would be best attained, and fewest lives sacrificed, by one such bayonet-charge as had never failed to strike terror into an Indian foe Polwhele, however, belonged to a class of generals which has long flourished in the British army, generals whose physical courage cannot atone for their intellectual cowardice Not therefore till he heard that the artillery ammunition was completely exhausted, not until the enemy's cavalry had actually charged the left half battery, would he consent to bring his infantry into action It was then too late The infantry, pressing forward with irresistible ardour, did indeed accomplish enough to show that they might have gained an easy victory if they had been commanded with tolerable skill but the artillery could no longer support them the enemy, though driven from the village, still occupied scattered houses in its neighbourhood, and Polwhele, perceiving that they threatened to cut off his retreat, reluctantly gave the order to fall back upon Agra *

The British forced to retire into the fort

Meanwhile the women in the fort had been anxiously waiting for the issue of the battle upon which they believed their safety to depend The distress of those whose husbands were in action was terrible. For three long hours they listened to the roar of the contending artillery. At last some of them, unable to bear the strain of suspense any longer, hurried to the flag-staff on the Delhi gate, from which they knew that they would be able to discern the movements of the two armies Then their

* *Times*, Sept 2, 1857, p 5, col 6, Sept 1, p 8, col. 5, Colonel White's *Indian Reminiscences*, pp 117-21, Thornhill, pp. 191-4

suspense was terminated indeed, but by despair, for they could plainly see their countrymen retreating, hotly pursued by the enemy's cavalry Presently a mob of soldiers, covered with dust and dripping with blood, came rushing into the fort, clamouring for drink Now that they knew the worst, the women forgot their own sorrows Some of them went about ministering to the needs of the thirsty soldiers Others watched over the bedsides of the wounded and the dying And among the objects of their tender devotion was one whose dying moments Florence Nightingale herself might have been proud to soothe,—Captain D'Oyly of the Artillery, whose last spoken words were, "Put a stone over my grave, and say that I died fighting my guns."*

All this time the budmashes of Agra, hounded on by the notorious rebels, had been burning the houses in cantonments,† destroying the property which Colvin's fatuity had left in their way, and murdering every Christian who still lingered in the city. Clustering on a large plateau within the fort, the refugees were forced to listen to the hellish din, and looked on helplessly at the swift ruin that was overtaking their houses, from which the flames, leaping upward, shed their glow over the maze of streets, over the broad expanse of the river, and upon the snowy wonder of the Taj ‡ For two days after the first outburst of seditious fury had subsided, disorder went on unchecked, for the English were too dispirited by their late disaster to march out and reassert their authority. On the 8th of July, however, Drummond, having heard from a friendly native that there was no serious opposition to be expected, sallied forth with a small escort, and paraded the streets The disorder instantly subsided Thenceforward, whatever danger might threaten them from without, the garrison had nothing to fear from the people of the city itself.

Life in the fort

The fort, within which nearly six thousand human beings were now gathered together, looking forward to a captivity of indefinite duration, was a huge, massive erection of red sandstone, commanding the town and the river Inside its walls were grouped a vast collection of

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* Coopland, pp 181–2, Raikes, p 62

† They showed special malignity in destroying the educational buildings.

‡ *Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, 24 Sept 1857, p 680

§ Coopland, p 183

edifices—plain Government buildings, lofty marble halls, graceful mosques, pavilions, towers, kiosks, and splendid palaces * Within these the captive people had now to find what accommodation they could In the corridor running round the noble palace of Akbar ladies might have been seen busily trying to impart a look of comfort to the little improvised huts which had been assigned as their temporary homes Among the fugitives were to be found representatives of many different races, creeds, and professions,—soldiers, civilians, English ladies and their children, Eurasians, native servants, monks, nuns, and even rope-dancers and circus-riders belonging to a travelling French company Though at first there was necessarily confusion among such a motley assemblage, huddled together in the narrowest quarters, order was soon established by the exertions of those in command Every room, hut, shed, and cell was carefully numbered Nor were regular official duties suspended The chief power was practically in the hands of the military authorities, of whom Colonel Cotton was soon appointed the head Under their vigorous rule measures were promptly taken for the victualling of the garrison and the strengthening of the fort, and all gradually resigned themselves to make the best of their new life

In that life there was more of dull monotony than of tragic interest The civil and military officers indeed were occupied from morning till night with their respective duties, and many of the ladies forgot the weariness of captivity in ministering to the wounded, or teaching the young, but some of the inmates found the time hang heavy upon their hands No one indeed was exposed to any risk of starvation no one was obliged to crouch within doors for fear of being struck down by shot or shell, there were no worse hardships to be endured than those which were inseparable from the conditions of over-crowding and want of ventilation But, as time passed, and the hoped-for news of the fall of Delhi never came, the inmates of the fort became seriously anxious for their own safety. Indeed, though there were many true heroes among them, they were afterwards taunted by some of their countrymen with having displayed a very unheroic spirit It is true that they more than once had good reason to believe that they were in imminent danger of

* *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857-58), Part 1, p 190.

being attacked by overwhelming numbers but still there was something ludicrous in the idea of some hundreds of able-bodied men subjecting themselves to all the inconveniences and suffering all the terrors of a besieged garrison, while they were never really besieged at all It seems at last to have dawned upon them that it was discreditable to remain shut up in a fort instead of boldly marching out, and trying to re-establish their authority in the surrounding country, for, towards the end of August, a small force was actually despatched to Allygurh, defeated there a band of rebels whose chief had set up a government of his own, and thus did something to weaken the general belief that British authority had collapsed *

Correspondence of Macpherson with Sindia

That the garrison were in fact spared the miseries of a siege was due to the exertions of Macpherson, who, during the whole period of his captivity, corresponded unceasingly with Sindia and Dinkur Rao If he had not thus inspired them with his counsel, and cheered them by his support, they could never have succeeded, as they did, in carrying out his instructions Though the reverses which the English everywhere suffered in July and August seemed to warn Sindia to desert a hopeless cause while there was yet *time*, his confidence in Macpherson was such that he submitted for four months to the insults, and resisted the entreaties of his troops, and, in turns, defying, flattering, deceiving, and sowing dissensions among them, baffled their evil purposes, and kept them inactive at Gwalior, at the very crisis at which their help might have turned the scale in favour of the rebels With all his loyal intentions, he would never have been able to do this if it had not been for the marvellous influence which, even from a distance, Macpherson exercised over him †

Exploits of Dunlop

In other districts besides Allygurh the officers were trying manfully to re-establish their authority It was of course impossible for them to achieve anything like complete success while the natives could point to the glaring failure of the English to reconquer Delhi.

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* *Parl. Papers*, vol. xliv., Part 3, pp 157-9, Coopland, pp 159, 162-6, 1[illegible], 184-213

† Macpherson, pp 320-3, Sindia's chief thakoors and zemindars were [wrought] upon by Dinkur Rao to support him —*Enclosures to Secret Letters [from] India*, 8 to 22 Oct 1857, p 774

Still, something was done. The credit of striking the first effective blow for the restoration of British prestige and of orderly rule belonged to the magistrate and collector of Meerut, Robert Dunlop This officer was enjoying a well-earned holiday in the Himalayas, when he heard of the massacres at Meerut and Delhi Instantly he rode down to Simla, and thence drove on to Delhi Thence again, in obedience to the orders of his Commissioner, Hervey Greathed, he rode to Meerut The authorities at that station were, as has been pointed out already, absolutely helpless Since the outbreak not a rupee of revenue had been collected Dunlop, however, soon showed what one resolute and clear-headed man could do to repair and start again the machinery of Government He appealed to all loyal men to enlist as mounted volunteers for the restoration of order in the districts Unemployed officers, high civilians, merchants, clerks, and Sikhs eagerly gave in their names Major Williams, the superintendent of police, was appointed commandant, and so zealously did the adjutant proceed with the work of drilling, mounting, and arming the volunteers, that in three days one troop was ready for service From the dust-coloured uniform which it adopted, the corps received the name of Khakee Ressalah All the men who composed it could ride many of them were good shots and practised swordsmen, and the Europeans at least were aflame with a fierce indignation against the ruffians who had outraged and massacred their kinsfolk, that would more than make up for the paucity of their numbers On the first expedition which the corps undertook, accompanied by two guns and a few dragoons, it burned three villages, which had been occupied by Goojurs, killed several of these rebels, and took forty prisoners, of whom thirty-four were promptly hanged. The very next day the collection of the revenue began But Dunlop and his comrades did not on that account relax their exertions Supported, as occasion required, by any guns they could procure, and a few policemen, native Christians, armed musicians, dragoons, and riflemen, they swept over the districts, encouraged the friendly portion of the population, rescued terror-stricken bunyahs, burned numerous villages, destroyed hundreds of Goojurs, slew two formidable chiefs, who, not content with plundering, had actually raised the standard of insurrection, and by these measures taught the astonished natives

May 31

July—Sept.

that there was still some vitality left in the British Government.*

All this time the Lieutenant-Governor had to live in the bitter consciousness that he could achieve nothing worthy of the high place which he filled. Besides all his other trials, he was called upon to endure cold looks, and to read savagely insulting letters from many who ought to have supported him † Gradually his health became more and more feeble but, though the doctors told him that his life would be sacrificed if he did not rest, he continued to serve his country to the best of his ability On the 9th of September he died Only a few days before, conscious that his days were numbered, he had quoted to his secretary the pathetic words

Death of Colvin

"Nec mihi jam patriam antiquam spes ulla videndi" ‡

He was not one of the world's heroes. Yet the most brilliant achievements recorded in the history of the Indian Mutiny do not awaken a truer interest than the heroic failure of this man, who continued, faithful to the end, to face a responsibility which, as he knew all along, was too great for him. And, so long as England continues to honour a man who tries to do his duty, there will be some who will cherish the remembrance of his dying words —"I have not shrunk from bearing the burden which God has called upon me to sustain, I have striven to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and man." §

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* *Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, 24 Sept 1857, p 435, Major Williams's *Narrative*, pp 11–2, 14, Dunlop

† Not long before his death, he received from Calcutta a despatch, containing a reprimand for delay in sending in the administration report of the preceding year, and an elaborate form, to be filled up and returned, regarding the unanswered letters for the past six months "What manner of men," remarked Thornhill's brother, "must they be in Calcutta, who, at a time like this, when they ought to be straining every nerve to save the Empire, are thinking only of unanswered letters?"—Thornhill, pp 272–3.

‡ Virg *Æn*, ii 137

§ Kaye, vol. iii pp 415–6

CHAPTER V.

CANNING'S POLICY EVENTS AT CALCUTTA.

1857

IT is now necessary to relate the events that had taken place, during the past few months, at the seat of the Supreme Government

For some days after the seizure of Delhi, Canning allowed himself to be buoyed up by delusive hopes Men whose information and authority he was not strong enough to disregard, kept assuring him that the worst would soon be over On the 16th of May Colvin telegraphed, "The worst of the storm is past, and the aspect of affairs is fast brightening," and on the 20th he telegraphed again, quoting the words of Commissioner Greathed, "A very few days will now see an end of this daring mutiny "* But Canning ought not to have allowed these comfortable anticipations to put him off his guard It was high time for him to arise, and show that he was indeed Governor-General of India. Though, however, he set an example of personal courage and manly calmness when some of the English residents of Calcutta were unmanned by the direful news from the North-West, he yet left on the minds of those who were most anxious to believe in him, the impression that he was not equal to the occasion In the face of new announcements of mutiny and murder, he would not believe that the whole army was infected with the spirit of disaffection, or at least ready to be swayed into mutiny against its inmost convictions He did

Canning fails to realise the gravity of the crisis.

* *Parl. Papers*, vol xxx (1857), pp 228, 345. On the 25th Canning himself recorded a similar opinion, p 19

in[illegible] hurry up the reinforcements, as they arrived in Calcutta, towards the North-West, and passed an Act on the 6th of June, giving extraordinary powers to civil and military officers for the summary trial and punishment of all disturbers of the peace* but he took no steps to provide for the safety of Bengal itself or even of the capital Not only the English, but the Christians of every class and nation at Calcutta saw the danger In the third and fourth weeks of May the Trades' Association, the Masonic Fraternity, the Armenians, and the French residents, vying with each other in the loyalty of their addresses, offered their services for the protection of the city. The Government, however, refused their offers Cecil Beadon, the Home Secretary, replying on the 25th of May to the offer of the French residents, wrote in a tone of confidence which even the recent *telegrams of Colvin ought not to have encouraged* "Everything," he said, "is quiet within six hundred miles of the capital. The mischief caused by a passing and groundless panic has already been arrested "† This letter was very bitterly criticised by many of the loyal inhabitants of the city They asserted that, if Canning had availed himself of the services of the volunteers, an entire regiment could have been set free to act against mutineers, and that, if he had promptly disbanded the native regiments still remaining at Barrackpore and those at Dinapore, the Europeans who were detained for the unproductive duty of watching over these disaffected troops could have been spared to march for the relief of Cawnpore But Canning did not believe that the volunteers would be efficient soldiers In this belief, as was afterwards proved, he was wrong Again, he would not disarm the native regiments at Barrackpore and Dinapore, because he feared that such a measure would exasperate the sepoys at other stations where there were no white soldiers to protect the Christians from their vengeance, and also because he trusted the *professions of loyalty* which several of the regiments in question were careful to make The former of these reasons was plausible, but it was not sound Canning afterwards found himself obliged to consent to the disarming of the Barrackpore sepoys, and none of

He rejects the offers of the Calcutta volunteers and refuses to disarm the sepoys at Barrackpore and Dinapore

June 13

* *Parl Papers*, vol xxx (1857), pp 408–9, 438–40
† *Ib*, pp 20–3

the evils which he had dreaded followed the measure. On the other hand, the fact that the sepoys at Dinapore were allowed to retain their arms did actually produce evils, the magnitude of which it would be difficult to exaggerate. In his willingness to trust the sepoys' professions of loyalty Canning was not alone The commandants of sepoy regiments, almost without exception, believed in the fidelity of their men. As they had lived with them for years, interested themselves in their pursuits, received many tokens of their gratitude, and in some cases the most touching proofs of disinterested fidelity, shared with them the hardships of many campaigns, led them to many victories, and sustained their drooping spirits under defeat, it was not strange that only a few officers of rare insight should have discerned the premonitory symptoms of a mutinous spirit But that experienced colonels, who heard by every post that regiments around them had risen against their officers, and sometimes added murder to mutiny, should have obstinately clung to the delusion that their own particular corps would remain faithful, and often only surrendered their faith when the bullets of their babalogue* had lodged in their breasts, is one of the most extraordinary phenomena in the history of the Indian Mutiny If there is one more extraordinary, it is that Canning, who was unbiassed by the associations which had led the officers to repose confidence in their men, should yet have shared that confidence While those who condemned him for refusing to disarm the sepoys, and rejecting the offers of the volunteers, took no account of the considerations which influenced him, his advocates, on the other hand, did not see that the necessity of allowing for those considerations proved that at best he erred in company with some respectable statesmen A well-known historian, who defended his rejection of the offers of the volunteers by the argument that, in the hour of danger, nine out of ten of them would have stayed at home to protect their families and possessions, instead of joining their companies, was forced to admit that when, later on, it became necessary to accept their offer, they rendered excellent service to the State † The same historian, complaining of the unfair ness of condemning Canning's early policy after the event had

* Children—a term of endearment often used by commanding officer towards their sepoys

† Kaye, vol. ii. p. 125, vol. iii. pp. 12, 42.

proved it wrong, forgot that there were other statesmen in India who, from the first, *adopted a policy which, as they foresaw would be the case, the event proved right* Canning argued that it was unnecessary to disarm his regiments, because they had professed themselves loyal John Lawrence argued that it was necessary to disarm *his* regiments because no sepoy's profession of loyalty could be trusted If it was unfair to blame Canning after the event had proved him wrong, it was unfair to praise Lawrence after the event had proved him right Canning had not yet grasped the great truth that a handful of Englishmen could only hold millions of disaffected Asiatics in check by boldly taking the initiative against them, and trusting that they would be too terrified to perceive the absence of a material force sufficient to support the uncompromising assertion of authority Many reasonable excuses have been made for his failure but history refuses him the title of a great statesman, because others, who had fewer resources than he, needed no excuses.

It was from no lack of sympathy with the Christians at unprotected stations that he did not send them more succours. He spoke from the depths of his heart when he lamented his inability to help them Rightly believing that his duty to the empire was more urgent than his duty to suffering individuals, he sent all the troops whom he believed that he could spare to the rescue of the posts the preservation of which was, in a political and military sense, most important If, however, he had consented in time to the enrolment of the Calcutta volunteers and the disarming of the sepoys at Barrackpore and Dinapore, he would not have had to resist the promptings of compassion. we should never have heard of the well of Cawnpore *

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* I am aware that the Governor-General in Council wrote, "*If all the garrison of Fort William could have been spared, there were no means of sending one more man to Cawnpore in time for its relief*"—*Parl. Papers* vol. xliii (1857–58), p 98 But he himself supplied the means of disproving this assertion. On May 24 he telegraphed to Henry Lawrence, "The bullock-train can take 100 men a day at the rate of 30 miles a day"—*Ib*, vol. xxx (1857), p 353 The distance from Calcutta to Cawnpore is 689 miles The capitulation of the Cawnpore garrison did not take place till June 26 It is clear then that, if the means of transport were forthcoming along the whole line of road, there was ample time to send troops to their relief But, it may be urged, after the mutiny at Allahabad on June 6, it was impossible for some days to collect cattle for the journey of more than

The citizens of Calcutta were not the only friends whose offers of assistance he set at nought. The kingdom of Nepaul was at that time virtually ruled by the famous Jung Bahadoor, a very unscrupulous but very sagacious minister, who had visited England eight years before, and had carried back with him to India a firm faith in the resources of the British power. Though, however, from the moment when the mutiny broke out, he never doubted that the English would, in the end, re-establish their supremacy, he was far too clear-sighted to be deceived by the momentary lull in the middle of May which deluded the Governor-General. He therefore made an offer to Major Ramsay, the Resident at Khatmandoo, to lend a body of Goorkahs to the British Government. Ramsay took a few days to think over the proposal. It had come to his knowledge that the Governor-General had authorised Henry Lawrence to avail himself of the aid of a Goorkah force, in case it should be offered to him. Accordingly he decided to take upon himself the responsibility of accepting the offer, and wrote to Lawrence and General Lloyd, the commander of the Dinapore Division, informing them that he was prepared to send detachments to their aid. On the 15th of June the first detachment, a thousand strong, marched from Khatmandoo. Only two days later, however, the Resident received an express from the Foreign Secretary, George Edmonstone, ordering him to recall the Goorkahs, if they had not passed the frontier. Ramsay obeyed. In recrossing the pestilential belt of jungle which stretched along the base of their hills, they suffered grievously from sickness.

He plays fast and loose with Jung Bahadoor

June 1

June 5

June 6

June 17

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120 miles from that station to Cawnpore. This objection is plausible, but it may easily be answered. To say nothing of the fact that the mutiny of June 6 was due to Canning's want of foresight in not garrisoning Allahabad with European troops, as Outram advised him to do, he ought to have sent the 84th up country on the 6th of May instead of on the 20th. Had he done so, the mutiny at Allahabad, if it had occurred at all, would not have interfered with the passage of the troops. This accumulation of proofs will probably be considered sufficient. But there is another. On May 26 Henry Lawrence urged by telegraph that ekkas (or native pony-carts) should be collected for the more rapid transport of the troops. *Ib.*, p. 360. This suggestion was not accepted, apparently because ekkas were not thought suitable for Europeans. *Ib.*, p. 358. But John Nicholson used them with the best results.

but the vacillation of Canning condemned them to undergo the same trial again, for hardly had they reached Khatmandoo when he ordered the Resident to ask Jung Bahadoor for three thousand men to be sent to the aid of Lawrence

June 23

It is true that the accounts of these transactions published by Canning's opponents* were grossly distorted But the story, told, as it has been here, in strict accordance with the facts, carries with it a fresh proof of his deficiency in statesmanship †

Like Jung Bahadoor, the loyal citizens of Calcutta had the grim satisfaction of being solicited to renew the offers of help which, when they were first made, had been contemptuously rejected From the time when Secretary Beadon returned his memorable reply to the address of the French residents, the English newspapers persistently urged Canning to retract his refusal of the offers of the volunteers But he remained immoveable until John Grant, pointing out, with unofficial directness of language, the dangers to which the capital was exposed from the Mahometan population, the budmashes, the armed retainers of the King of Oude, the disaffected native regiments within its precincts or at neighbouring stations, the weakness of the loyal troops, and the untrustworthiness of the native police, and declaring his conviction that the effects of even a street-riot at the capital would be felt not only throughout Bengal, but to the very extremities of India, at length overcame his objections ‡ Accordingly, while he protested that his opinion as to the worthlessness of the volunteers was unshaken, he consented to sanction their enrolment If they had been hurt by his rejection of their original offer, many of them rose above the littleness of resenting his want of confidence by want of loyalty Sacrificing all private considerations to the good of the State, heedless of scorching suns and drenching rains, they voluntarily submitted to the labour of drill and discipline, and formed themselves under the able guidance of Orfeur Cavenagh, the Town-Major, into a powerful brigade, and, as they ultimately earned the hearty commenda-

Offers of the volunteers accepted

June 12

* *L q* Mead, who was, in 1857, editor of the *Friend of India*

† *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 575, *Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, July 4, 1857, pp 5, 15, 17, 29, 33, 24 Nov. 1857, pp. 704, 706–8, Mead, pp 86–7

‡ Kaye, vol. iii. p. 10, note.

tion of Sir Colin Campbell, they could afford to forgive the scepticism of Canning

Though it had been given with an ill grace, the Governor-General's consent to the formation of the volunteer corps might have established a more cordial feeling between himself and the European residents of Calcutta if he had not, on the very next day, passed another measure which was sure to provoke a fresh outburst of ill-will against him He had for some time observed with uneasiness a growing inclination on the part of the native journals to advocate the cause of the mutineers The English journalists were giving him even more uneasiness in another way From the very outset of the Mutiny they had, with a keener discernment than the Government, advocated a policy of vigorous repression but they had fallen into the habit of publishing unguarded statements which, it was feared, might give a perilous advantage to the disaffected, and, though they had at first striven to give Canning credit for the power of dealing with the crisis, they had throughout uncompromisingly denounced his advisers, to whose influence they ascribed the feebleness of his policy * It was natural that members of Council should resent this treatment. They had not learned, like English statesmen at home, to bear the most stinging invectives with equanimity they had often before smarted under the blows of the Press, and perhaps they now saw in the recklessness of its comments on the political situation a pretext for silencing its attacks upon themselves They found Canning ready to listen to their arguments, although, only a few days before, he had refused to put the native editors under restraint, on the plea that the remedy would be worse than the disease On the 13th of June he went down to the Council Chamber, and there, in a sitting of forty minutes,† proposed and carried an Act requiring every printer to obtain a license from Government, and empowering the executive to suppress any publication, without warning, whenever it might see fit ‡ Never, since the days when Prynne had his nose slit and his ears cut off for publishing the Histriomastix, had any act of an English states-

The Gagging Act

* *Friend of India*, May 21, 28, June 4, 1857, pp 482, 506, 531, *Calcutta Englishman*, Feb 21, April 1, May 16, 18, 19, 25, June 5

† *Red Pamphlet*, p 103

‡ *Parl. Papers*, vol xxix (1857) pp 164 5

man been received with a greater burst of indignation than that which greeted the announcement of this measure Contemporary writers did indeed exaggerate the extent of the feeling, for the general opinion of the lawyers of Calcutta supported the Governor-General but its depth was revealed unmistakeably by the furious invectives which journalists and pamphleteers of every profession heaped upon the Act What specially exasperated them was that they, the representatives of the free and enlightened Press of England, should be put on a level with treasonable native scribblers They refused to believe that the Government was sincere in its denunciations of the mischief which their recklessness had produced They did not hesitate to say that Canning and his advisers, conscious that they had committed great errors of policy, were resolved to prevent information of those errors from being transmitted to England *

The Gagging Act, as this measure was petulantly called, may be criticised from two points of view As a matter of policy, the worst that can be said of it is that it was unnecessary It is true that Henry Lawrence, who knew the natives well, told Canning that the disloyal native press was less dangerous than the loyal but headstrong English journalists but it is not likely that, if the latter had been left unfettered, their leading articles and sensational paragraphs would have seriously increased such disaffection as prevailed † Such a danger, supposing it to have existed, might have been averted if the Governor-General, while thanking the Press for their zealous co-operation, had given them a friendly warning against using their power indiscreetly. On the other hand, it would be absurd to contend that the unpopularity which the Act brought upon the Government weakened in the slightest degree the hands of anyone who was concerned in the suppression of the Mutiny

Again, it would not be true to say that the Act was a blunder simply because it aroused the indignation of the Press The evil was more deeply seated If Canning's previous measures had been such as to inspire the Press with confidence, if he had

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* *Friend of India*, June 18, 1857, pp 579–80, 583, *Overland Bombay Times*, 1857, p 235, *Englishman*, June 15, 24, 30, Mead, *Red Pamphlet*, &c

† See Mead, pp 187–98, *Parl Papers*, vol xxix (1857), pp 159–76, *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 566, and *Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, July 4, 1857, p 487

shown a hearty sympathy with the loyal inhabitants of the city, a readiness to work with as well as for them, he might have passed the Act with comparative impunity If Wellesley had been Governor-General at the time of the Mutiny, he would not have thought twice about gagging the Press if he had believed that it was doing harm, and the Press would have submitted to his will without a murmur But then Wellesley knew the secret of ruling men's hearts

It has been pointed out that one of Canning's reasons for refusing to disarm the sepoys at Barrackpore and Dinapore had been his trust in the professions of loyalty which they had been careful to make On the 8th of June Hearsey had forwarded to Calcutta a petition, expressing the wish of the 43rd and 70th regiments to be allowed to use the Enfield rifle * It may be imagined then with what amazement and disappointment Canning read on the 13th a telegram from Hearsey, informing him that the Barrackpore regiments intended to rise that very night, and urging that they should be instantly disarmed He consented sadly For he still clung to the belief that to disarm was unnecessary, and his consent looked like an admission that when, in his generous eagerness to catch at any sign of repentance and good feeling on the part of the native army, he had thanked the Barrackpore sepoys for their address, he had shown a dangerous credulity † On the 14th, Hearsey telegraphed that the disarming had been successfully performed.‡ At the same time the detachments at the Presidency and at Dum-Dum were deprived of their power to do mischief

Disarming at Barrackpore, Calcutta, and Dum Dum

That day had been a memorable one in the annals of the Mutiny A rumour of the intentions of the Barrackpore sepoys had reached Calcutta, and many believed that they designed, when they should have murdered their own officers, to march down upon the capital, and, reinforced by the armed retainers of the King of Oude, to finish their bloody work by the slaughter of the Christian population The merchants and traders of Calcutta closed their ears against these rumours, and set an example of steadfast courage But

Panic Sunday

* *Parl Papers*, vol xxx. (1857), p 461, inc 86

† Colonel Ramsay tells us that, when the 70th volunteered, "Lord Canning was much pleased, and said it was the first ray of sunshine he had felt"—*Recollections of Military Service and Society*, vol i p 242

‡ *Parl Papers*, vol xxx. (1857), p 491, inc 113

their example was not generally followed. Members of Council and Government secretaries, who, so long as their own persons were safe, had scoffed at the idea of rebellion, and censured brave officers for allowing their men to mutiny, barricaded their doors, or abandoned their homes in terror, to take refuge on board the ships in the river * Inferior officials, scampering wildly across the plain from Chowringhee to the Fort, besieged the commandant with demands for admittance Eurasians rushed out of their houses in the suburbs to seek refuge from an imaginary foe The streets were thronged with the carriages and palanquins of the fugitives, while their deserted homes lay at the mercy of the budmashes, but no thieves came to disturb the silence of the forsaken houses, for the natives themselves, not less terrified than the Europeans, lay cowering in their dwellings, expecting every moment to be searched out and cut down by the white soldiers of whose coming they had heard Thus passed the morning and afternoon of Panic Sunday but towards evening the terror began to subside the fugitives sneaked back to their houses the night set in and passed off quietly, and in the morning the city once more wore its accustomed aspect

June 15
Arrest of the King of Oude

Before the close of Monday, however, another memorable event occurred The Barrackpore sepoys, whose designs had excited such dread, had indeed been disarmed, but it was still probable that the King of Oude's men would work mischief The Government had in their hands proofs that some of the King's dependents had tried to corrupt the fidelity of the native sentries at the Fort, and it was impossible to say that their machinations had not spread much further. Canning therefore, acting on Grant's advice, sent Edmonstone to secure the person of the King and his chief advisers. Starting on his mission in the early morning, Edmonstone entered the palace after posting a strong detachment of soldiers round the walls, to cut off the King's escape When he had arrested the Prime Minister and the chief courtiers, he sought for admittance to

* Kaye (vol iii p 34) refuses to accept the charges of cowardice made against high officials by contemporary writers as proved, but Malleson, on whose authority I have made the statement in the text, (*Red Pamphlet*, p 105) says that "he was prepared then as he is now prepared, to name, had he been called upon, the individuals to whom he referred"—*Hist of the Indian Mutiny*, vol i p 24

the presence of the King himself After some delay he was ushered into the royal apartments, and courteously informed the King that the Governor-General, having heard that plots were being carried on in his name, desired to remove him, by way of precaution, to Government House The King, protesting his innocence with unwonted energy of manner, suffered himself to be led off For a while he bore himself firmly, but on the way to Fort William he burst into tears, and, contrasting the misery of his own lot with the glory of his ancestors, exclaimed that, if General Outram had been there, he would have borne witness to the submission with which he had obeyed the British Government Edmonstone, however, could only carry out his orders, and the King and the ministers who had made him their tool were handed over to the custody of Colonel Cavenagh Thus deprived of their leaders, the Oude plotters were rendered powerless *

June 17
Sir Patrick Grant

Two days later Sir Patrick Grant, the Commander-in-Chief at Madras, came to Calcutta, to assume temporary command of the Bengal army His career had been one of smooth and unbroken success, but, though he had proved himself a cool-headed soldier in the bloody combats with the Sikhs, Charles Napier had said of him that he was only fit to command a division † He was now called upon to command an army, and to suppress a rebellion But he declined the honour which was thrust upon him. If he had believed that he was not the fittest man that could be found to command the army in the field, and had on that account resolved to remain in Calcutta, his resolve would have been worthy of all honour But there is no evidence to show that he thought so humbly of his own powers No doubt he acted up to his lights but the reasons which he gave for his action were unsound, if not frivolous While Delhi was still in the hands of triumphant mutineers, while from a hundred stations his countrywomen were uttering a despairing cry for help, he declared that he could best serve his country by taking up his abode in Government House, and there directing on paper the movements of the troops whose glory he refused to share He would not take the field in person, he said, because, as Commander-in-Chief, he would require a numerous staff and

* *Red Pamphlet*, pp 106-7
† *Life of Sir C Napier* vol iv p 282

extensive office establishment, with an entire regiment to escort them, an entire regiment of those British soldiers, of whom the whole force then in India, by the expenditure of all their energies, could not yet hold revolt in check Above all, he had a great work to perform, to which even the suppression of the Mutiny must be postponed Others might have ability enough for crushing the rebellion of the native army he had to meditate on its reorganisation and regeneration * But, in declining to take the field, he performed a service which his countrymen appreciated more than his designs for the direction of the campaign or the reorganisation of the army For the officer whom he selected to act against the rebels and mutineers was Brigadier-General Henry Havelock

June 18 Gloomy announcements

On the day after Grant's arrival, it was reported in Calcutta that Delhi had fallen but the joy which this announcement created was succeeded by disappointment when authentic information was received that only the cantonments on the Ridge had fallen into Barnard's hands A succession of gloomy messages, only varied by the occasional announcement of an isolated success, poured in upon the Governor-General, and early in July he heard the first rumours of an awful tragedy at Cawnpore But with all these troubles coming upon him, and a load of personal odium to oppress him, he bated not a jot of heart or hope While waiting for the coming of the China regiments, he had been labouring to supply the lack of military material which had been so apparent when the first attempts at retrieval had been made, sending to Madras for supplies of clothing and camp equipage, collecting horses for the cavalry and artillery, and preparing the means of carriage for the sick and wounded †

The Clemency Act.

Yet he had to suffer the bitter punishment of the ruler, who, having once lost the confidence of his people, finds that even his good measures are ignored or condemned The news of the sufferings of their countrymen had excited in the hearts of the Europeans at Calcutta a savage desire for indiscriminate revenge Canning was determined not to listen to their clamours Among his many

* *Parl Papers*, vol xxx (1857), p 528, see also Malleson, vol. i. pp 29-32

† *Parl Papers*, vol xxx (1857), pp 527-8

noble qualities were a calm love of justice, a scrupulous respect for the rights of others, which were only misunderstood by his contemporaries because they were not balanced by decisiveness On the 31st of July he passed a Resolution providing that no native soldier belonging to a regiment that had not mutinied, should be punished, unless he were taken with arms in his hands, but should simply be handed over to the military authorities, or imprisoned until the orders of Government respecting him should be declared, that mutineers or deserters belonging to regiments that had mutinied, but had not murdered their officers, should, when taken without arms in their hands, be dealt with by the military authorities, and lastly, that mutineers or deserters belonging to regiments that had committed any outrage on Europeans, should be judged by the civil power, but not punished until the Government had decided upon any extenuating circumstances connected with their offences * Though the Resolution offered no mercy to those who did not deserve it, though Canning had insisted as sternly as anyone on the duty of inflicting condign punishment on the murderers of Europeans, the public would listen to no defence of the measure, for in their eyes Canning could do nothing right. Nor was the distrust in his statesmanship confined to India Even in England the press and the public alike condemned the Resolution, and nicknamed its author "Clemency Canning"

The Arms Act

Another bill, drafted at the same time as the Clemency Resolution, but not finally sanctioned until the 11th of September, intensified the popular indignation Struck by the danger of allowing the vast mixed population of the capital to go about armed at such a time, the Governor-General resolved to take away from them the right of carrying arms without a license † Here, muttered the British residents, was the blunder of the Gagging Act repeated in another form. They refused to listen to the argument that the necessary license would not be refused to them if they asked for it, for their hatred of the Government was now too firmly fixed to be shaken by any argument

Not less unpopular than this Act was the refusal of the Governor-General to agree to a memorial signed by a number

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* *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857-58) Part 1, pp 8-10
† *Ib*, Part 3, pp 544-8

of influential residents of Calcutta, praying for the establishment of martial law throughout Bengal.* The clamours which his refusal stirred up were not the less loud because he justified it by the argument that ample powers had already been granted to the executive authorities for the punishment of offenders, and that, even if it were desirable to establish martial law, it would be impossible to spare the European troops whom the memorialists desired for its enforcement. So bitterly indeed did the European community hate him that, before the close of the year, they actually petitioned the Queen for his recall.†

Aug. 21. Canning refuses to establish martial law in Bengal.

But, in the midst of his troubles, he was not altogether without consolation. On the 1st of August Outram appeared in Calcutta, fresh from his Persian triumphs, and ready to render the State any service in his power. A few days later another officer arrived, who was destined to win a lasting fame in the suppression of the revolt, Captain William Peel, with his Naval Brigade. On the 13th of August Sir Colin Campbell, with his Crimean honours thick upon him, came and took up the office of Commander-in-Chief, with the warm approval of the army, who knew him as "the war-bred Sir Colin," Charles Napier's lieutenant and friend. Moreover, reinforcements were now fast flowing in; and, as the transports steamed up the river, the people on the course stood up in their carriages, and, taking off their hats, cheered and cheered again the soldiers who were coming to save them.‡

Arrival of Outram, Peel, and Sir Colin Campbell. Aug. 8.

Nearly a year and a half of Canning's administration had passed away; and in the last six months of that period he had had such an opportunity of winning distinction as had fallen to the lot of no other Indian statesman. He had indeed been severely tried; but, if he had endured the trial, his glory would have been proportionately dazzling. But he had made it evident to all men that he was not strong enough for the work that he had to do. No ruler could indeed have shown a more calm and dignified courage, a

Review of the first year and a half of Canning's administration.

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* *Parl. Papers*, Part 1, pp. 7, 8.
† *Ib.*, vol. xliii (1857-58), pp. 94-103.
‡ Mead, p. 85.

more conscientious devotion to the State. When, five years afterwards, he lay upon his death-bed, worn out in his prime by the incessant labour and the galling anxieties of this baleful summer, he might have told himself, if his humility had not been equal to his self-sacrifice, that he was dying for his country as honourably as the bravest soldier who had perished on the field of battle But these qualities were not sufficient to make a Governor-General of India Nor is it possible to draw a strict line of demarcation between the moral qualities of a statesman, and the qualities that constitute fitness for rule. None can tell how far Canning's indecision, his morbid scrupulousness, his excessive deference to the opinions of his advisers were congenital qualities, how far they were due to failures of his own in building up his character in earlier years Men judge each other by results, and, if the method is a rough one, it generally leads to as correct a conclusion as a more subtle analysis The English at Calcutta judged Canning hardly, but they erred less in the direction in which they drew their conclusions than in the extent to which they pushed them At bottom, it is not true that what roused their anger against him was his clemency fear and wounded pride had made many of them savage, but not dead to the feelings of humanity. If a Hastings or a Wellesley had ruled them in those days, he would have forced them to realise the dignity of mercy for he would have made it very clear to them that he could afford to be merciful because he was strong Those who justified Canning on the ground that he was biassed by the erroneous advice of his counsellors, forgot that they were thus denying his title to the chief glory of the statesman, the power of penetrating through the mists of prejudice and error which surround him. When the storm burst upon his vessel, he never left the helm, though the seas dashed over him but, when his crew saw that he gave the wrong words of command, and that he had no firm hold upon the wheel, the ablest of his lieutenants pressed forward to support his feeble grasp, and made their voices heard above his.

CHAPTER VI.

BENGAL AND WESTERN BEHAR.

1857
Macdonald at Rohnee

WHILE Canning had been labouring on, and striving to bear up against the news of calamity in Upper India and the undisguised hatred and contempt of the English inhabitants of Calcutta, events had occurred in Bengal itself which pronounced a pitiless condemnation on his policy On the evening of the 12th of June, Major Macdonald, who commanded the 5th Irregular Cavalry at Rohnee, and, like his comrades at other stations, had never doubted the loyalty of his men, was surprised, with two of his brother officers, by three troopers, and cruelly wounded At first he would not believe that the traitors belonged to his own regiment, but, when a few days afterwards he discovered his mistake, he arrested them, had them tried, assumed the responsibility of carrying out their sentence without orders from Government, came out, though still suffering acutely from his wound, to superintend their execution himself in presence of the whole regiment, silenced a cry for rescue which one of them made to his comrades, by threatening to blow out his brains, and, standing his ground alone till all three were swinging lifeless from the gallows, proved by his splendid decision that the unaided moral force of a single Englishman could subdue the brute strength of a thousand mutineers *

The presence, however, of an able officer at an isolated station was not enough to secure the safety of the vast Presidency of

* *Parl Papers*, vol xxx (1857), pp 519, 521

Bengal

Halliday and Tayler

The danger to which that Presidency was exposed was very differently estimated by the two civilians upon whom lay the chief burden of providing for its security These were Frederick Halliday, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and one of his local representatives, William Tayler, the Commissioner of Patna.* The former, who had already gained a strong influence over Canning, was a hard-working administrator and a very able man of business But, though his outward appearance impressed many with the idea that he was a born leader of men, he was not universally respected even by the members of his own order Some of them complained that he had treated them with Oriental duplicity, and Dalhousie's private secretary had openly accused him of falsehood without eliciting any repudiation of the charge † No doubt he had his good points but the part which he played in the suppression of the Mutiny was too insignificant to make it worth while to attempt any elaborate analysis of his character.

William Tayler was a man of culture, keen sense of humour, and wide sympathies His spirits were marvellously buoyant and elastic for his years, and withal he was by nature so combative that he could not always bring himself to live submissively under a superior whom he could not respect ‡ This temper, however, though it was injurious to his prospects of official success, did not weaken his efficiency as a public officer

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* The authorities that I have consulted for my account of Tayler's administration are *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857-58), Parts 1 and 2, Tayler's Memorial presented to the Duke of Argyll, *Ib*, vol lx (1878-79), Halliday's Minute presented to Parliament in 1879, *Ib* Tayler's Reply to Halliday's Minute, *Ib*, vol lii (1880), *Papers connected with the Removal of Mr W Tayler from the Commissionership of Patna*, *Calcutta Englishman*, *Papers regarding the Patna Industrial Institution*, Taylor's *Patna Crisis*, Dr Duff's *Letters to Dr Tweedie on the Indian Rebellion*, and the following pamphlets by Tayler,—*The Injustice of 1857*, *Veritas Victrix*, *Fact v Falsehood*, *What is Truth? Further Disclosures*, *A Narrative of Events connected with my Removal from the Patna Commissionership*, &c

† Mr Halliday and Mr Courtenay (Copies of correspondence published in the *Calcutta Englishman*)

‡ He was not quarrelsome, and he had formerly been on terms of friendly acquaintance with the Lieutenant-Governor but he believed that, on a recent occasion, he had been badly treated by him, and that his official character had been unfairly blamed, and he could not rest until he had done his utmost to make all men acknowledge that he was right, and that his antagonist was altogether wrong

Deploring the want of sympathy which prevented the average English official, in spite of the conscientious industry with which he fulfilled his duties, from becoming familiar with the habits of thought of the natives and their real feelings towards British rule, he had not contented himself with working for the material prosperity of his people, but had tried, like Henry Lawrence, to reach their hearts as well But the tenderness which moved him to make allowance for their weaknesses, was balanced by a stern resolution which would never allow them to dispute his supremacy He was not a man of iron, however, but a man of tempered steel The sympathy and the kindliness of his nature were allied with a keen sensitiveness He felt that the duty which lay before him was a grave one, that his responsibility was appalling

Dangerous situation of the Patna Division

The districts under his charge contained about twenty-four thousand square miles, and a population of more than five millions These numbers, however, give only a faint idea of the stake which depended upon his power of dealing with the crisis Great mercantile interests were in his keeping, for within his Division lay many of the estates of the wealthy indigo-planters of Bengal, and at Patna itself a well-stored opium godown tempted the avarice of the enemies of order Still more important and no less exposed to danger were the political interests over which he had to watch, for the city of Patna, with its hundred and fifty thousand* inhabitants, was a hot-bed of Mahometan intrigue, and the memory of a great conspiracy which had been discovered some ten years before, remained to warn the English that they were surrounded by a population among whom there were many restless spirits, secretly longing to overthrow their power, and re-establish a Mahometan dynasty When the first symptoms of revolt appeared, there was hardly a man in Behar who did not look to Patna as the head-centre of disloyalty.†

To meet these appalling dangers, Tayler had few resources

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* In the *Patna Crisis*, p 21, it is stated that the population "is estimated at 400,000" According to the census of 1872 the number was only 158,900 Hunter's *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. vii pp 330-1

† *Patna Crisis*, pp 21-2, 24, Dr Duff's *Letters*, p 10, Letters in *What is Truth?* and *Fact v Falsehood* *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857-58), Part 1, pp. 562-3, Part 2, p 92

but the strength of his own character. At the outlying station of Segowlie, indeed, was quartered the 12th Irregular Cavalry, under Major James Holmes, an officer upon whom he knew that he could depend for enthusiastic support. But he had not a single European soldier in Patna itself; he could not rely confidently upon his native police; and the British soldiers at Dinapore, condemned by the Government to the unprofitable task of watching the sepoy regiments, could give him no help. To crown all, he knew that he would have neither encouragement nor support from the Lieutenant-Governor. A dispute had lately arisen between them on a question of educational reform. The general opinion was that Tayler had been in the right, and that the Lieutenant-Governor had treated him badly. Moreover it was notorious at Calcutta that the Lieutenant-Governor, fearing perhaps lest unpleasant revelations might be made, if Tayler were suffered to continue the controversy, had resolved to put an end to it by seizing the first plausible pretext for transferring him to another post.*

Resources of Tayler

When, therefore, the news of the mutiny at Meerut revealed to Tayler the extent of the danger which threatened him, he knew that he would have to meet it alone. And he did meet it. Spurning the timid suggestions of the judge, who tried to persuade him that it was best to flee from Patna, he at once proceeded to make arrangements for protecting the lives of the people under his charge, and securing the Government property.† Before going on to see how he succeeded, the reader must pause for a moment, and survey the city of Patna.

May 20. His early measures

Patna is situated on the right bank of the Ganges, three hundred and eighty miles north-west of Calcutta, and ten miles east of Dinapore. It was a busy and thriving centre of commerce, but possessed none of those architectural glories which lent such interest to the chief cities of the North-Western Provinces. One street, running the whole length of the city from the eastern to the western gate,

Patna

* See App. A.

† *Correspondence connected with the Removal of Mr. W. Tayler from the Commissionership of Patna*, pp. 5, 6, 33-5. It has been stated that at this time "the Europeans voted by acclamation confidence in their Commissioner." This is incorrect. The vote of confidence was not passed till July 4. *Correspondence, &c.*, p. 149.

was tolerably wide, but the others were merely narrow, crooked, filthy alleys, lined with mean houses, most of which were built of mud Viewed from the river, however, the city had a more attractive appearance The houses of the wealthier citizens, with their flat roofs and carved balustrades, lined the bank, and, with scattered trees, turrets and spires, and old gateways of dark red stone, were mirrored in the water Emerging from the western gate, the traveller found himself approaching the European houses, which were scattered along the banks of the river The Commissioner's house stood by itself in spacious grounds close to the south-western corner of the race-course, which lay south of the line of houses on the right bank *

The 7th of June at Patna

On the evening of the 7th of June, while driving on the race-course, Tayler was informed that the Dinapore regiments were expected to rise that night He at once drove to the nearest European houses, warned the inmates, and offered them the shelter of his house, sending messengers at the same time to warn those of the Europeans who lived further off In less than an hour all except a few who had found a refuge elsewhere came hurrying up to avail themselves of his offer Soon afterwards, while he was busy making arrangements for their accommodation, he was called out of doors It appeared that one of the native police had just shown his commanding officer two letters, which he had received from the Dinapore sepoys, announcing that they were going to rise at once, and wished the police to seize the treasury at Patna, and then march out to meet them The officer handed the letters to Tayler Tayler saw at a glance that, however loyal the individual policeman might be, the letters proved the existence of a previous understanding between the force generally and the sepoys But he had absolutely no instruments for the preservation of order except these very police and a few of Holmes's Irregulars In this awful extremity his heart did not fail him All night long, weighed down but not crushed by the burden of his anxieties, he kept watch over the safety of his guests, while his wife ministered to their comfort, and a body of the suspected

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* Roberts's *Scenes and Characteristics of Hindostan*, vol i p 171, Hunter's *Imperial Gazetteer*, vol. vii. pp 325, 332, *Patna Crisis*, pp 19 20

police and some of the irregulars mounted guard outside. In the morning, however, instead of the expected mutineers, who had postponed their rising,* there arrived a reinforcement of Sikhs, under an officer named Rattray, whom Tayler had lately summoned to his assistance Then the fugitives returned, with lightened hearts, to their homes, but they knew that, so long as the crisis lasted, the shelter of the Commissioner's house would be open to them †

June 8

While, however, the arrival of the Sikhs removed Tayler's immediate anxiety, it added another For Rattray reported that his men had been constantly insulted on their march by the population Most of the zemindars indeed were believed to be well disposed but the magistrates generally expressed a conviction that the Mahometan portion of the population was thoroughly disaffected, and that, if any disturbance occurred at Patna, the infection would probably spread throughout the province Moreover the fear that prevailed at Patna naturally communicated itself to the surrounding districts Everyone laboured under a vague but oppressive sense of danger Some of the Europeans so far yielded to their fears as to desert their posts but Tayler vehemently exhorted them to return On the day following the alarm at Patna, he had sent Halliday a full report of the dangers which threatened that city The reply which he received a few days later was in itself enough to stamp the Lieutenant-Governor as unfit for his post For, in the face of the evidence which Tayler's letter contained, he wrote that "he could not satisfy himself that Patna was in any danger," and that "the mutiny of the Dinapore sepoys was inconceivable" But Tayler's opinions were not to be shaken by the utterances of his chief, notwithstanding the air of infallibility with which they were delivered He knew precisely the extent of the danger and the conditions upon which

Affairs in the districts

June 8

June 13 Halliday will not believe that Patna is in danger

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* Fortunately the letters had been ignorantly delivered to a man for whom they had not been intended, and the sepoys who had brought them from Dinapore, on discovering the mistake which they had made, hurried away with all speed from the station To this mistake was probably due the postponement of the rising —MS Correspondence

† *Patna Crisis*, pp 27–31 *Correspondence connected with the Removal of Mr W Tayler from the Commissionership of Patna*, p 6

it depended He believed that he could hold Patna in check so long as the Dinapore sepoys remained quiet; but he knew that the sepoys would mutiny unless they were disarmed He therefore strongly urged General Lloyd to disarm them Lloyd replied that he could keep them down without disarming them Tayler, whose insight detected the timidity which lay behind this assumed air of confidence, could now only do his best to avert the probable results of Lloyd's weakness And he saw that the only possibility of doing this lay in resolutely repressing the Mahometans of Patna, and in preventing all communication between them and the Dinapore sepoys *

Tayler in vain urges General Lloyd to disarm

To effect the former of these objects, he devised an expedient of which Warren Hastings might have felt proud to be the author The most dangerous inhabitants of Patna were the Wahabees, the Puritans of Islam, whose close organisation, widely extended communications, and Jesuit-like submission to their rulers gave them a formidable power Tayler knew that, if he could secure the persons of the three Moulvies who directed the Patna branch of the sect, he would obtain a certain pledge for the good behaviour of their disciples, for no Wahabee would venture to commit any act that could endanger the safety of his venerated leaders † He therefore determined to arrest the Moulvies, but, as he knew that Halliday had long ago resolved to believe that the Wahabees were mere harmless enthusiasts, in spite of the clearest proofs of their disloyalty, he did not inform him of his design This was one of the very few occasions on which he did not send his chief full

His measures for the preservation of order

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* *Patna Crisis*, pp 35-7, 42-4, *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857-58), Part 1, pp 5, 6, pars 6-10, Part 2, p 102, *Correspondence connected with the Removal of Mr W Tayler from the Commissionership of Patna*, p 2, pars 6-8, p 10

† *Patna Crisis*, pp 45-7, 51 "The dangers," wrote General Le G Jacob to Tayler, "that you so admirably nipped in the bud were not confined to your quarter of the world they were part of a network of conspiracy, spread over the length and breadth of India" Colonel Colin Mackenzie wrote "When you laid bare the conspiracy of the Wahabees, the ramifications of which extended throughout nearly all India, and when you arrested their chiefs, you cut the tap root of that upas tree" *Selection of Letters from distinguished Indian Statesmen* See also *Punjaub Mutiny Report*, p 61, par 40, which proves that a treasonable correspondence went on between the Mahometans of Patna and those of Peshawur

reports of his circumstances and of his intentions*, and, if he had not made these exceptions to his rule, if he had shrunk from acting on his own responsibility, he would not have been allowed to save Patna. Reflecting that any attempt to effect the arrests by ordinary means would only cause a riot and perhaps loss of life, he felt obliged to resort to stratagem. Accordingly, on the 18th of June, he invited the Moulvies and a few of the most respectable native citizens to his house to discuss the political situation. Next morning all were assembled in his dining-room,† and took their seats round the table. Presently the Commissioner, accompanied by Rattray, a few other Englishmen, and a native officer, entered the room. Two of the Moulvies looked very uncomfortable when Rattray, with his sword clanking, sat down beside them, but their leader, Moulvie Ahmed Oollah, soon began to take part in the conversation, and made some sensible suggestions for the defence of the city. At length the conference was over, and all the native guests, except the Moulvies, were told that they might go. Turning to the Moulvies, Tayler informed them that he was obliged to detain them as hostages for the good behaviour of their followers, and handed them over to the custody of Rattray. "Great is your Excellency's kindness," said Ahmed Oollah, joining his palms, "great your wisdom: what you order is the best for your slaves; so shall our enemies be unable to bring false charges against us." "What is pleasing to you," smilingly replied Tayler, "is agreeable to me." Just as the three were about to be led away, he said significantly to Ahmed Oollah, "Remember, I have not arrested your father; but his life is in your hands, yours in his." The Moulvie looked as if he understood the hint.‡

June 19

Now that he had checkmated his most formidable enemies, Tayler felt that he was master of the situation. Next day he followed up his victory by the arrest

June 20

* Proof of this will be found in *Parl. Papers*, vol. xliv. Part 2, in Mr. Tayler's pamphlet *Further Disclosures*, in the copy of his Memorial to the Secretary of State for India, pp. 25–9, and in his reply to Halliday's Minute, pp. 48–9, 66–8. The other measures which Tayler carried out without informing the Government *beforehand*—though he reported them fully after their accomplishment—were those recorded in the next paragraph.

† It ought to be mentioned that the dining-room was used at the time as an office.

‡ *Patna Crisis*, pp. 44–51.

of the patrolling darogah,* who, he knew, would use his power to prevent investigation of the designs of the disaffected if, as seemed probable, he was himself a sharer in them

June 20

Finally, he required the citizens to surrender their arms, and to remain indoors after nine o'clock at night † The obedience that was paid to these orders was a striking illustration of the homage which mankind yield to moral force In Calcutta men asked each other in amazement how it was that, while from other stations news of massacre and rebellion was constantly arriving, from Patna came week after week the news that tranquillity was maintained and British prestige vindicated ‡ Perhaps even Halliday could have answered, Because Patna is ruled by William Tayler

Tayler's success was not, however, wholly unbroken On the 23rd of June Waris Ali, a native police-officer, was arrested, and found to be in possession of letters which convicted Ali Kureem, a wealthy Mahometan who lived near Patna, of treasonable intentions.

Conspiracy and sedition

The magistrate of Patna was sent to seize the criminal, but, after a long and wearisome chase, returned unsuccessful On the 3rd of July a riot broke out in Patna itself As, however, the bulk of the malcontents had been too thoroughly frightened by Tayler's measures to join in it, it was easily suppressed by the Sikhs, while the ringleaders were seized and brought to trial Chief among them was a Mahometan bookseller named Peer Ali A number of letters inviting various persons to join in organising an anti-Christian crusade were found in this man's house From the fact that these letters, having all been found in the house of a single man, were evidently a mere sample of others, that Peer Ali would never have kept men in his pay except for a regular plot, and that Waris Ali had been ready to give up his lucrative situation in order to join Ali Kureem's enterprise, Tayler argued the existence of an extensive conspiracy which his own anticipatory measures had alone prevented from issuing in an appalling calamity Peer Ali himself bore the most emphatic testimony to Tayler's vigilance by confessing that his strong measures had forced the conspirators

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* Native Superintendent of Police

† *Patna Crisis*, pp 53-4 *Correspondence, &c*, pp 20, 44, 58-9.

‡ *Red Pamphlet*, p 174

to strike before they were ready They and twenty-one of their associates, convicted of having taken part in the riot, were summarily hanged *

The natives who supported Tayler

But Tayler would not have been able to procure the evidence which he required against these men, if he had not been helped by three loyal natives, Syud Wilayut Ali Khan, Moula Buksh, the deputy magistrate, and Hidayut Ali, the subahdar of the Sikh corps Throughout the crisis these men laboured day and night to support him, helping him to patrol the city, and furnishing him with all kinds of valuable information, which only a native could obtain, though their loyalty exposed them to the hatred and ridicule of their fellow-citizens Aided by their investigations, he was able to discriminate between the countless accusations against influential Mahometans which were put into his hands, so that he could afterwards assert that he had never moved against a soul, except in the way of precaution, till suspicion had been corroborated by many concurrent circumstances †

Red tape

While Tayler was working with heart and soul for the safety of his Division and his people's lives, Halliday was carping at his measures and warning him against doing anything illegal or irregular The littleness of the man's mind appeared in such words as these —"It is impossible that you should have anything to do of greater importance than keeping the Government informed of your proceedings "‡ No indeed! The saving of a province was a trifling matter compared with the sacred duty of writing detailed official reports How different was the spirit in which John Lawrence directed his subordinates!

May 25 Major Holmes

It was not only within the limits of Patna that Tayler's example made itself felt As soon as danger began to threaten Behar, his friend and ardent admirer, Major Holmes, wrote to Canning, expressing with great freedom and plainness, the view that stern and instant

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* *Parl Papers*, vol xliv Part 2, pp 6–13, 15–23, *Patna Crisis*, pp 65–72 It is important to notice that this was not a Wahabee plot The Wahabees were now powerless Peer Ali was a native of Lucknow, and had been corresponding treasonably with one Museeh-oos-Zuman of Lucknow *ever since the annexation of Oude*

† *Ib*, pp 57, 65, 72–3

‡ *Correspondence, &c*, p 14

repression was the only policy for the times Canning told him in reply that he was entirely wrong, and that his "bloody, off-hand measures" were not the cure for the disease But Holmes cared nothing for the rebuke "I am determined," he rejoined, "to keep order in these districts, and I'll do it with a strong hand"* His method was simple, but very effective On his own responsibility, he actually placed the whole country between Patna and Goruckpore under martial law † His only instrument for enforcing it was his single native regiment but he thoroughly trusted his men, and, if they were not loyal to him in their hearts, they were so carried along by his daring spirit that they could not choose but do his bidding Sending out parties of them to seize evil-doers and protect the civil stations, and declaring that he would visit with instant death anyone who showed the slightest sign of disaffection, he soon established such a terror of his name that none dared to stir a finger in the cause of rebellion Canning had argued in his letter that the sepoys who had not yet rebelled were mad with fear but Holmes knew that fear might well hurry men in their position, like frightened beasts, to turn upon their masters, and that, until they were thoroughly cowed into submission, it would be useless to attempt to reason with their fears

May 30

June 15

In spite, however, of all that Holmes and his irregulars could do, it was impossible for Tayler to guarantee the safety of his Division, so long as there was danger of a mutiny at Dinapore

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* Kaye, vol iii pp 7, 104

† On July 29, Halliday, in a rebuke which he administered to Tayler for taking upon himself to praise this unauthorised act, remarked, "At the time when Major Holmes declared martial law in Behar, nothing whatever had occurred to justify that step, and the moment it was known by Government, his act was set aside and cancelled" On the 30th he himself proclaimed martial law in the districts of Shahabad, Patna, Behar, Sarun, Chumparun, and Tirhoot *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857-58), Part 2, pp 145, par 3, 146

It is quite true that, in the view of a purblind statesman, nothing whatever had occurred to justify Holmes in declaring martial law when he did But Holmes was a man of clear mental vision The principle upon which he acted was one that never failed in the Mutiny, the principle of taking the bull by the horns while it was hesitating whether it should lower its head or not, in other words, of acting against men who were known to be disaffected *before* they had time to commit overt acts of disaffection Halliday, on the other hand, put off declaring martial law until *after* the Dinapore mutiny, which he had declared "inconceivable," had broken out

Shall the Dinapore sepoys be disarmed?

During the three weeks that had elapsed since he had tried in vain to persuade Lloyd to disarm, he had indeed still maintained order, but he knew that if Lloyd persisted in neglecting his advice, the rising must sooner or later take place, and, by letting loose an army of mutineers through Behar, undo all the good which he had done At last the English merchants resolved to try whether their arguments could not induce the Government to order the General to take the step which he dared not take on his own responsibility A favourable opportunity for stating their views had just presented itself Canning had originally excused himself for refusing to disarm the Dinapore sepoys on the ground that the reinforcements which would give him the power to do so had not yet come Now, however, they had arrived, and had been ordered to call at Dinapore on their way up the Ganges By his own confession, the Governor-General now had the game in his own hands But, while many of his lieutenants were assuming the responsibility of executing great measures without consulting him, he shifted the responsibility which naturally belonged to himself on to the weak shoulders of the poor old General at Dinapore Well knowing that Lloyd had only promised that his men would remain quiet if "some great temptation" did not assail them, well knowing that a great temptation was even then strongly assailing them, well knowing that Lloyd would never have the courage to use his own discretion, he yet left it to him to decide whether he would employ the newly-arrived reinforcements to deprive his regiments of the power of doing mischief.* The merchants, to whom this decision was privately made known, saw its imbecility, and resolved to make a last effort to induce Canning to change it Accordingly, on the 20th of July, they sent a deputation to implore him to consider what vast commercial interests were imperilled by the threatening attitude of the regiments at Dinapore, and to urge him to secure the safety of those interests once for all, and restore public confidence by commanding Lloyd to disarm He curtly refused their request †

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* The Commander-in-Chief's letter to Lloyd, written at Canning's request, will be found in *Parl Papers*, vol xliii (1857–58), p 103

† The reasons which he gave were, first, that there was no apparent necessity for disarming, and secondly, that the 5th Fusiliers must not be delayed on their way to join Havelock.

The natural results of his blind obstinacy followed On the 22nd of July a body of the 5th Fusiliers reached Dinapore Lloyd shrank from using his authority to detain them, and let them go by. Of course he regretted his decision But he was still to have another chance of setting himself right Two days later two companies of the 37th touched at Dinapore, awaiting his commands His remorse was strong enough to make him order their disembarkation, but it was too weak to make him turn them to good account If it is true that *Nemo repente fuit turpissimus*, it is equally true that a weak man cannot suddenly become strong Lloyd writhed under the responsibility so cruelly cast upon him Afraid to crush the nettle in his grasp, afraid to leave it alone, he just touched it, and, when it stung him, he cast the blame on others As he could not brace himself to disarm his men, he thought he would take away their percussion-caps instead Next morning accordingly the European troops were drawn up, by way of precaution, in the barrack-square, close to the native lines, and the caps were carted away from the magazine Many of the sepoys showed great indignation when they saw the carts moving towards the barracks, but they feared, with the British soldiers close at hand, to give full vent to their feelings Lloyd, however, was not content with the success of his half-measure He ordered his officers to hold a second parade of the sepoys in the afternoon, while the European troops would be busy eating their dinners, and then require them to surrender the contents of the cap-cases which they carried on their persons It is difficult to gauge the depths of the folly which prompted his resolve For the measure which he now ordered would exasperate the sepoys far more than that which had been with difficulty carried out in the morning, and the absence of the British troops would deprive the officers of the only means of crushing the mutiny which seemed certain to follow. An attempt was made, however, to obey the order The parade was held The sepoys were ordered to empty their pouches They answered the demand by firing on their officers The noise warned the European soldiers and the General that mutiny had broken out. The General, having given certain vague instructions to his officers how to act in case of a difficulty, did not think it necessary to do more than go on board a steamer in the river, from which he hoped to be

July 24.

July 25

Mutiny at Dinapore

able to shoot a few stray mutineers.* The soldiers turned out and formed up on the parade ground; but their officers, who could not have understood the instructions which they had received, dared not assume the responsibility of acting in the General's absence; and not till two staff-officers hurried up from the steamer, bringing his orders for an advance, was any attempt made to retrieve the fortunes of the day. It was then too late. Only a few sepoys, who rashly attempted to cross the river, were destroyed by the guns of the steamer, or drowned. The rest, after re-possessing themselves of the caps that had been taken from the magazine, went off in the direction of the river Soane. As that river was then greatly swollen by the rains, Lloyd had only to lead his Europeans in pursuit, in order to overtake and destroy them before they could effect a passage. He afterwards recorded in his own defence the extraordinary opinion that such a step would have been of little use. But it is not extraordinary that he did not attempt it. A general who had shown such feebleness in the morning was not likely to prove an able commander in the evening. The wonder is that next morning it did occur to him to send a party of riflemen in a steamer† up the river, to intercept the passage of the mutineers. But his attempt failed; for the steamer, after running a short distance, stuck fast on a sand-bank. Even before it had returned, however, he received a startling piece of news, which led him to resolve to entrench his position at Dinapore, and leave the surrounding country to the fate which he had brought upon it, thus imitating with the closest fidelity the line of conduct which Hewitt had followed after the mutiny of the 10th of May. In many respects, indeed, this shameful story of the mutiny at Dinapore resembles the story of the mutiny at Meerut. The strength of the British force at hand to crush resistance, the imbecility of the General, the dread of responsibility manifested by the officers, and the amazement of the mutineers at their own success, were all points common to the two disasters. And for the weakness

July 26

* Malleson (vol. i. p. 67) is wrong in saying that Lloyd went on board the steamer after the morning parade. He did not go until after the mutiny had broken out. See his letter to the *Daily News*, referred to below.

† It should be mentioned that, when travelling by river in India, passengers are generally carried in what is called a flat, towed by a steam tug.

of Lloyd, as for the weakness of Hewitt, the only excuse that can be pleaded is the infirmity of old age.*

Kunwer Singh.

There was a man, however, in Behar, who, though several years older than Lloyd, still retained the vigour of his youth, and was resolved to use it to effect his own aggrandisement, and complete the humiliation of the English. This man was a Rajpoot noble, named Kunwer Singh, who, formerly a staunch adherent of the English power, had lately cooled in his friendship from resentment at the hard usage which he, in common with many other great landowners, had received from the Revenue Board of Bengal. As, however, he had a strong personal friendship for Tayler, he might even now have thrown in his lot with the English, if he had not heard at the critical moment that an important law-suit in which he was engaged had gone against him. Tayler had earnestly interceded for him with Halliday, but in vain.† The result was, that Kunwer Singh determined to join the Dinapore mutineers with his retainers, and regain his lost wealth by the sword. This was the news that made Lloyd resolve to shut himself up in Dinapore. But, more fortunate than Hewitt, he had a strong and wise adviser at hand, who would not let him do so cowardly an act. As soon as he had heard of the mutiny, the Commissioner, true to himself still when others were false to him and to themselves, had sent out a body of Sikhs, volunteers, and police, to cut off the retreat of the stragglers, but on the next morning he heard of an event which, letting loose a fresh multitude of enemies against him, forced him to recall this little force for the protection of Patna. The 12th Irregulars, catching the infection of disloyalty from the Dinapore mutineers, had murdered his dear friend and strong supporter, Major James Holmes. Still his counsel might effect something. Accordingly he wrote to the General, imploring him even then, at the eleventh hour, to go in pursuit of the mutineers. Suddenly the alarming news arrived

July 25

July 26

July 27.

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* I am not aware that Lloyd has ever had any defender but himself. Anyone who wishes to read his defence will find it in the *Daily News*, Oct 30, 1857, pp 4, 5. He "thought," he says, "that the men would feel it quite madness to attempt resistance with only fifteen caps per man." There was method in their madness.

† *Correspondence, &c*, pp 243-5, pars 51-7 (letter from Mr Samuells). Letter from Tayler to Secretary to Government of Bengal (April 5, 1858), pars. 34-52, *Parl Papers*, vol. iv (1878-79).

that they had already crossed the Soane, and were actually besieging Arah.* Lloyd had now no choice but to accept Tayler's advice.

Arah, the chief town of the most turbulent district in the Division, was situated twenty-five miles west of Dinapore. The European residents had been duly warned of their danger. The warning, however, would have availed them little if Tayler, with rare foresight, had not already sent fifty of Rattray's Sikhs to help them in case of an attack. Even with this reinforcement, the whole garrison were only sixty-eight in number, and their fortress was nothing but a small building, originally intended for a billiard-room, belonging to Vicars Boyle, the railway engineer, who, regardless of the jeers of his friends, had fortified and provisioned it to resist the attack which he had all along deemed possible. His dwelling-house was about seventy yards off, and, to deprive the enemy of the cover which it would have afforded, he had demolished its front parapet. On the evening of the 26th the Europeans, after writing letters to their friends, went into the billiard-room, and bricked themselves up. Boyle, whose foresight had rescued the others from instant destruction, was naturally one of the leading spirits in the crisis, and associated with him was Herwald Wake, the magistrate, who assumed command of the Sikhs. Next morning the sixty-eight were standing at their posts behind their improvised defences, and, when the mutineers, after releasing the prisoners in the gaol, and plundering the treasury, advanced to the attack, as to an assured victory, they were hurled back in astonishment and discomfiture by a well-directed fire. From this moment they only ventured to discharge their muskets from behind the cover of the walls and trees that surrounded the house, and anyone who ventured into the open was sure to be struck down by a bullet from the garrison, who aimed securely from behind the sand-bags which they had thrown up on the roof. Baffled in fair fight, the assailants began to try a succession of foul stratagems for the destruction of their foe. They strove to corrupt the fidelity of the Sikhs by threats, by appeals to their religious feelings, and by offers of a share in the plunder. But the Sikhs, confident in the resources of their commandant, were proof even against this

Siege of Arah.

July 27.

* *Patna Crisis*, pp. 76-8; *Correspondence, &c.*, pp. 110, 112.

last argument Then the rebels tried to suffocate the garrison by setting on fire a heap of chillies outside the walls but a favourable wind arose and blew the stifling smoke away The same wind carried off the disgusting stench arising from the rotting carcases of the horses belonging to the garrison, which the rebels had killed and purposely piled up around the house Finally, Kunwer Singh unearthed two guns, which he had kept hidden ready for emergencies, and prepared to batter down the little fortress If he had had a good supply of ammunition, he might have forced the garrison to attempt to cut their way out, but, having no round shot at first, he was obliged to use the brass castors belonging to the pianos and sofas in Boyle's house, as projectiles * Yet Wake and his little band knew that, if help did not come soon, time must conquer them, for their provisions were beginning to run short At midnight on the 29th they heard the sound of distant firing in the direction of the Soane Could it be that their relief was at hand? † They were not kept long in suspense

July 28.

Influenced by the alarming news that Arah was being besieged, Lloyd had yielded to Tayler's entreaties, and sent off a force of Europeans and Sikhs to the rescue But the steamer that carried them ran aground in the darkness of the night, and Lloyd, overwhelmed by this fresh disaster, would have recalled the detachment and left the garrison to their fate, if Tayler had not once more shamed him into action. Another steamer had opportunely come up, and in it a hundred and fifty men of the 10th, with a few volunteers, were sent, under Captain Dunbar, to reinforce the stranded detachment On the afternoon of the 29th the united force, amounting to four hundred and fifteen officers and men, disembarked A small party was sent on to procure boats for the passage of a stream which crossed the road to Arah Soon afterwards the main body, who were cooking dinner, heard the rattle of musketry They at once fell into their ranks, and, after a few minutes' march, saw their comrades firing at a number of sepoys on the opposite bank of

Dunbar's expedition for the relief of Arah July 27

* Afterwards he procured some 4lb shot for one of the guns Boyle's *Brief Narrative of the Defence of the Arrah Garrison* pp 13-4

† *Ibid*, Hall's *Two Months in Arah in 1857*, *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857-58), Part 2, pp 333-4

the stream. Two or three hours were spent in getting the boats, and it was seven o'clock before the whole force had crossed Tired and hungry, but eager to rescue their beleaguered countrymen, they immediately began their march About an hour before midnight the moon went down, and Dunbar was urged to halt for the night, but, trusting to a report that the mutineers had raised the siege, he insisted on going on * A few minutes later the advanced guard was entering the suburbs of Arah, when a blaze of light flashed forth from a dense mango grove on the right of the road, and a fearful discharge of musketry ploughed through the whole length of the column. A second volley followed, and a third The enemy could only be momentarily discerned by the flash of their muskets but the British soldiers, conspicuous in their white summer dresses, were falling fast; Dunbar himself was slain, and the survivors, bewildered and losing all discipline, fired helplessly into space, or into each other At last a bugler, running to a field close by, sounded the assembly, and thus gathered his comrades round him Presently they found a tank in which they could take shelter, but they foolishly continued to discharge their muskets, and revealed their position to the enemy, who, invisible themselves, assailed them, as they lay crouching in the tank, with continual volleys In this desperate situation the officers held a council of war, and resolved to attempt a retreat to the Soane at day-break The day broke, but no joy followed the heaviness which had endured throughout the night Wearied and famished as they were, the soldiers had a march of fifteen miles before them, and for every foot of the way they had to run the gauntlet of an enemy who had cleverly availed himself of the cover afforded by the woods and jungles that lined the road Sharp reports echoed puffs of smoke curled up through the trees, and man after man dropped down Ever and anon some of the survivors, infuriated at the loss of their comrades, charged aimlessly right and left. but the mutineers, safe in ambush, laughed at their impotent rage. Among the British there was little order or discipline, but there was much heroism. Two privates of the 10th carried a wounded officer of their regiment the last five miles of the road, and young Ross Mangles of the Civil Service, with none to help

* Hall says that Dunbar sent out no scouts, though the night was dark, p. 47

him, rescued a wounded private in the same way. When at last the poor beaten force reached the river, they found nearly all the boats stranded, but many still retained their presence of mind, and, pushing the boats into the stream, *would not* enter them themselves till they had helped their weaker brethren on board One of the boats, under a freight of thirty-five men, was drifting helplessly down the stream with its rudder tied up and useless, when a volunteer, McDonell of the Civil Service, climbed on to the roof, and cut the lashings under a hail of bullets Many, however, as they strove to cross the stream, fell under the enemy's fire others, who had plunged into the water to escape the bullets, were drowned, and few indeed reached the steamer that was waiting to carry the detachment back in triumph to Dinapore But worse than all the sufferings that the enemy had inflicted upon them must have been the misery and the shame of that poor remnant, as they approached the landing-place at Dinapore, and saw their countrymen standing upon it, waiting to congratulate them on their victory, and knew how soon they would be undeceived As the steamer hove in sight, the crowd grew breathless with excitement they looked in vain for some sign of triumph on her deck their hearts sickened as they saw her run past her moorings and make for the hospital, and, as she eased up and blew off her steam, the soldiers' wives rushed down, beating their breasts and tearing their hair, to the water's edge, and screamed out curses against the General who had brought this calamity upon them *

The garrison of Arah still holds out

But there were stout hearts still beating in the province of Behar The little garrison of Arah, listening eagerly from the roof of Boyle's house to the sound of firing on the night of the 29th, soon heard it die away, and knew that no help had yet come But they could still help themselves Their provisions were nearly gone, but, when the besiegers were asleep, they sallied forth, and brought in four sheep as the reward of their daring Thirst began to afflict them, but the Sikhs dug a well, and procured an abundance of good water Ammunition threatened to fail, but Boyle had laid in a supply of lead, and

* *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857-58), Part 1, pp 185-9, *Times*, Sept 21, 1857, p 6, col 1, Nov 7, p 7, col 6, *Patna Crisis*, pp 82-8, Hall, pp 88-94

new bullets were cast Mining was repelled by countermining. Every expedient that the ingenuity of the besiegers could contrive was baffled by the ingenuity, but still more by the resolution of the besieged Thus four more days passed away. On the morning of the 2nd of August the sound of distant firing once more threw the garrison into suspense * And this time too the suspense did not last long

Vincent Eyre

Among those whose sympathies had been roused by the story of the leaguer of Arah was a major of the Bengal artillery, named Vincent Eyre This officer had been in the army for nearly thirty years, but, though he had seen much hard service, and had made many efforts to smooth the rugged lot, and elevate the moral condition of his men, whom he had honourably refused to forsake for the lucrative arena of civil employ, he had not yet found an opportunity of showing what he could accomplish as a leader in the field Fifteen years before, however, in the disastrous winter of 1841, he had found and used a more glorious opportunity The Afghan chiefs had demanded four British officers with their wives and children as hostages, and the British commander had asked for volunteers to undertake the cruel risk Every officer refused to expose his family to danger except Eyre, who, in the words of Lady Sale, "said, if it was to be productive of great good, he would stay with his wife and child"† He who reads this record of heroism will not ask for any further comment on Eyre's character

On the 10th of July he started with his battery from Calcutta, under orders to join the British force at Allahabad Touching at Dinapore on the 25th, he of course heard of the mutiny which had just taken place Re-embarking next morning, he reached Buxar on the 28th.

July 26.

There he was informed that the Dinapore mutineers were besieging Arah Hearing later in the day that some of them were marching up the country to destroy the Government stud property at Buxar, he detained the steamer for the night Next morning, as there appeared to be no imminent danger, he pushed on towards Ghazeepore,

July 29

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* Hall, Boyle.

† See an article on Eyre in Colonel Malleson's *Recreations of an Indian Official*, p. 276.

intending, if he should find that station safe, to return to Buxar, and thence march to the relief of Arah

He resolves to relieve Arah

Finding that Ghazeepore, though still quiet, was not out of danger, he landed two of his guns for its defence, and took in exchange twenty-five Highlanders of the 78th, to aid him in his projected expedition Returning to Buxar in the evening, he was rejoiced to find that one hundred and sixty men of the 5th Fusiliers had just arrived from Calcutta, and, as he felt that, with their aid, he would be strong enough to begin his march for Arah at once, he asked their commander, Captain L'Estrange, to join him L'Estrange promptly agreed, bargaining only that Eyre should take upon himself the entire responsibility of the expedition That Eyre did this for L'Estrange as unhesitatingly as he had done it already for himself, is his great title to the honourable mention of history Many officers would have gone cheerfully with two hundred men to attack five thousand but few would have turned aside from the instructions of their Government, and risked dismissal from the service, to do so Fifteen years before, however, Eyre had dared to risk even the safety of his wife and child in his country's service, and he was not likely now to shrink from risking his commission He therefore sent back the Highlanders to Ghazeepore, which had now greater need of them, and, appointing as his staff officer, Captain Hastings, the superintendent of the Buxar stud, by whose

July 30

energy and enthusiasm the needful supplies were collected within a single day, started to relieve Arah in the spirit of Montrose's favourite verses

> He either fears his fate too much,
> Or his deserts are small,
> That dares not put it to the touch,
> To gain or lose it all.

All through the long summer evening and the night the

July 31

force marched on, not halting till day-break, for but slow progress could be made along heavy roads, and with bullocks unused to the labour of dragging

Aug 1

artillery But at his next encamping ground Eyre heard for the first time the news of Dunbar's disaster, and, burning to efface it, pressed on till, on the evening of the 1st of August, he reached the village of Gujrajegunge, close to Arah Hardly had he broken up his

13

encampment on the following morning, when bugles were heard sounding the assembly a short distance ahead Evidently the enemy had come out from Arah to dispute his advance They were soon discerned lining a large wood which extended in front of the British force and on both its flanks Seeing that he was in danger of being surrounded, Eyre caused his guns to open fire on their front and flanks Presently they took shelter behind some broken ground in front of the woods, and opened a heavy fire of musketry Soon, however, unable to stand against the accurate discharges of the skirmishers whom Eyre had sent against them, they fell back to the woods Eyre, rapidly following up his advantage, brought all his guns to bear upon their centre they scattered to right and left, and the British, keeping up an incessant fire of musketry, hurried over the vacant space, and plunged into the wood The rebels were momentarily baffled, for the British, moving out of the further side of the wood, were protected from attack by inundated rice-fields which surrounded the road along which they marched But, two miles further down, the road was intercepted by a river, on the opposite side of which lay a village called Beebeegunge, and the rebels now hastened to seize this point, hoping thus to render Eyre's further advance impossible, for they had broken down the bridge, and thrown up breastworks to command the approaches Unable to find a ford, Eyre began a flank march to the right, towards the railway embankment, along which a road ran direct to Arah, and, to mask this movement, caused his artillery at the same time to play upon the village Close to the embankment, however, there was another wood, and the rebels now hastened to occupy it, in the hope of intercepting Eyre before he could gain the road Then began a desperate race between the two armies. The rebels won, and, when Eyre's force came up, opened fire upon it from behind the shelter of the trees Thus attacked in front, the British were sorely harassed by a simultaneous fire which Kunwer Singh's levies poured into their rear. Eyre must now carry the wood, or be vanquished. His fire could make no impression upon the enemy Twice within an hour they rushed up to the muzzles of his guns, and by the end of that time they were clearly forcing his infantry to retire But Eyre had still one resource left, a resource which has often saved British soldiers from imminent

Aug 2
Battle of
Gujrajegunge

defeat at the hands of a superior force He ordered his infantry to charge with the bayonet Forming rapidly, the little company of Fusiliers sent up a glorious cheer, and, bounding across the stream, which, though still deep, was here pent up within a narrow space, drove their four thousand enemies before them in utter rout, and did not pause until the guns, opening on the fugitives, had made the victory complete Meanwhile the garrison of Arah had been listening anxiously to the sound of the battle In the afternoon they saw the beaten rebels come hurrying up, collect their property, and go away They knew now that their deliverance had been wrought at last but there was a still greater joy in store for them For, when the morning came, they saw and welcomed their deliverers

Arah relieved

Aug 3

Eyre had no thought, however, of resting on his laurels He had baulked the mutineers of their prey but he had not yet deprived them of all power to do mischief, and other stations in Behar still lay at their mercy He resolved therefore to follow up his victory by striking a decisive blow at Jugdeespore, a village belonging to Kunwer Singh, to which the rebels had retreated The old chief's asylum was very strongly placed, and the roads which led to it were difficult but Eyre knew that his men would now follow him on any enterprise, and what he had already achieved had fairly entitled him to ask for reinforcements While he was waiting for them, he occupied himself in restoring order in the neighbourhood Martial law was proclaimed, and thirty wounded sepoys who were brought in, as well as a number of native officials who had entered Kunwer Singh's service, were hanged On the 8th and 9th of August the expected reinforcements arrived, two hundred men of the 10th and a hundred of Rattray's Sikhs Strengthened by these and by some of the defenders of Arah, Eyre set out on the 11th for Jugdeespore About half-past ten on the following day he caught sight of the faces of the enemy peeping through a dense belt of jungle on the opposite side of a stream which crossed the road The position which Kunwer Singh had chosen was, in all respects but one, faultless His stronghold lay sheltered behind the jungle, the mazes of which, familiar to him and his men, were unknown to his opponents the stream protected his front,

Eyre follows up his success

2 P M

and in his centre stood a village which he had fortified I
he had made the fatal mistake of weakening his force
sending a detachment to occupy another village on the oppos
side of the stream * The British skirmishers began t
battle by dislodging this detachment, and driving it across t
stream The rest of the enemy lay concealed in the jung
until the continued advance of the skirmishers provoked th
to fire Then Eyre, at last detecting their exact positi
brought his artillery to bear upon them, and forced them
huddle in confusion further to the right Now was the ti
to decide the battle by a bayonet rush The men of the 10
seeing the enemy wavering, were almost breaking loose fr
control in their burning desire to avenge their comrades w
had fallen with Dunbar, and, before their leader, Capt
Patterson, had finished speaking the word of command, tl
answered him by a ringing cheer, and dashed forward to
attack Nothing could have resisted that avenging charg
but the 10th were cheated of half their desire, for, as at B
beegunge, the enemy dared not look at the British bayone
but fled headlong into the jungle Meanwhile, Kunwer Sing
irregulars on the left had fought a gallant battle with t
Fusiliers, the Sikhs, and the volunteers but at last a howit
was brought up against them, and then they too fled Driv
the enemy before him, Eyre entered Jugdeesp
early in the afternoon It was not till the f
lowing day, however, that he could learn in w
direction Kunwer Singh had retreated Tl

1 P M

Aug 13

L'Estrange, and afterwards Eyre himself, went in pursuit
the old chief was never caught He had evidently lool
forward to a victorious campaign, for in his stronghold
discovered an abundance of ammunition, and enough grain
feed an army of twenty thousand men for six months,
obtain which he had mercilessly robbed the peasantry in
neighbourhood But the re-establishment of the British po
brought relief to the sufferers, for Eyre allowed them to ca
off the grain † Finally, after blowing up all the princi

* Malleson, vol i. pp 128–9

† *Recreations of an Indian Official*, pp 304–17, Account of the Relie
Arrah dictated by Major Eyre, printed in Gubbins's *Mutinies in Oudh*, A
No 10, pp 474–84, *Parl. Papers*, vol. xliv (1857–58), Part 1, pp 12
130–1, 143–7 The British loss in the first action was two killed and fift
wounded, in the second six wounded.

buildings in Jugdeespore, he started on the 20th of August for Allahabad In his campaign of three weeks he had effected far more than the original object of his expedition Not only had he relieved the beleaguered garrison of Arah He had quelled the insurrection which had threatened to spread from Behar throughout the whole of Bengal, and he had restored the safety of river communication between Calcutta and the North-Western Provinces In other words, he, a simple major of artillery, had prevented the achievements of Tayler from being neutralised by the weakness of the Government and the incompetence of Lloyd

Dangers which encompassed Tayler after Dunbar's failure

Before, however, this result was attained, the character of the Patna Commissioner had been subjected to a trial more severe than any which it had yet endured The mutiny of the sepoys at Dinapore had been bad enough but the defeat which Dunbar had sustained at their hands was far worse For it now seemed absolutely certain that Arah must soon fall, and then the besiegers would be free to overrun the whole province of Behar with fire and sword Many of the villagers of Shahabad, the district of which Arah was the capital, were in open revolt Kunwer Singh's success would be sure to encourage others to follow his example in fact the Rajah of Dumroon was said to have already joined the rebels The mutiny of the 12th Irregulars aggravated the danger Moreover, the native police and even the Sikhs would not be likely to remain loyal when they saw that their masters could no longer hold their ground The Europeans scattered at the stations under Tayler's control, who had been secure under his protection till his policy had been endangered by the weakness of Lloyd, were almost destitute of the means of resistance * For their lives and for the Government treasure under their care he was responsible And he had to bear this grievous burden of responsibility by his own unaided strength for his Government had never sympathised with him, Lloyd was an encumbrance rather than a help, and the gallant Holmes was dead But Tayler met the crisis without flinching He sent off the European ladies and children to Dinapore and, feeling that now, when things were at their worst, it behoved him to be most stern and uncompromising in asserting his supremacy,

* *Patna Crisis*, p 85 *Correspondence, &c* pp 115, 119-20, 140-3, &c.

he had the gallows shifted from the gaol to the middle of the race-course, where it would be in full view of all who meditated rebellion, and sent another batch of conspirators to execution This, however, was not enough He knew that to save the lives of the Europeans at the out-stations, prudence was needed as well as boldness Accordingly, after a few hours of earnest consideration, he issued an order directing the district officers at Gya and Mozufferpore * to come in to Patna, and to bring their treasure with them, unless their personal safety should be endangered by the attempt to remove it No measure of his administration had been more sagacious than this For, though he knew that Eyre intended to attempt the relief of Arah, he could not prophesy that Eyre, with a force only half as large as that with which Dunbar had been disastrously beaten, would show the moral strength and the military skill that could alone achieve success in so hazardous an enterprise he knew that, if Eyre should fail, the province must be lost, and he therefore resolved to sacrifice the out-stations for a time to the great object of saving his people's lives, holding Patna, and securing his treasure, rather than risk the loss of the whole by clinging vainly to a part † Far more admirable, however, than the statesmanship which dictated this measure was the moral courage which dared to carry it out in spite of the probable disapprobation of an unfriendly Government

July 31
His withdrawal order

Lautour, the magistrate at Mozufferpore, acted at once upon Tayler's order, and, as he had no troops to escort his treasure, left it behind But the magistrate at Gya, Alonzo Money, unlike Lautour, had forty-five Europeans, a hundred Sikhs, and a body of police to rely upon, besides a detachment of the 64th, stationed a few miles off, whom he could summon to his aid It is true that he was exposed to danger from the Dinapore mutineers but this danger, though serious enough to vindicate the withdrawal order, and to justify him in taking measures for obeying it, was not sufficiently imminent to justify him in abandoning his treasure Only three days

How Lautour and Money acted upon it

* The officers belonging to Chuprah and Moteeharee had already come in. The remaining station was Arah. It is unnecessary to mention the subdivisional stations

† *Correspondence, &c*, pp 114–16, *Patna Crisis*, pp 85–7

before, he had written to Tayler, saying that he had nothing to apprehend from the townspeople, and that, if not more than three hundred or three hundred and fifty mutineers attacked him, he had "no doubt of giving them a good thrashing" His courage, however, had since oozed out, for, a few hours after he received the order, he hurried away from the station under an escort, accompanied by the other Christian residents, leaving eighty thousand pounds in the treasury at the mercy of the enemies of Government * He thus flatly disobeyed the orders of the Commissioner, for, as his own letter proved, his personal safety would not have been endangered by removing his treasure When, however, he had proceeded a few miles, one of his companions, Hollings, of the Opium Agency, came up to him, and said that he could not endure the remorse which he felt at having been a party to the abandonment of the Government property Money listened, and resolved to go back and repair the wrong which he had done But, instead of taking his companions and his escort with him, as common sense would have suggested, he impulsively bade them continue their journey, and went back alone with Hollings Soon after his return, he called in the detachment of the 64th, and, when it arrived, removed the treasure under its escort, having already done his best to arouse the enmity of the native officials by openly burning the Government stamped paper, an act which they could only regard as implying a suspicion that they meditated plunder After quitting the station he would naturally have taken the road to Patna, if he had not been misled by false reports which said that a body of the Dinapore mutineers was advancing to dispute his passage As it was, he resolved to take the longer but safer road to Calcutta instead On his way, he received letters from the Governor-General and the Lieutenant-Governor When he opened them, he was probably somewhat astonished to find himself con-

July 28.

July 31

Aug 2

Aug 4

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* He excused himself for not removing the treasure by saying "The treasure could not be carried away, I had neither carts nor elephants" *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857 58), Part 2, p 227 He omitted, however, to add that there had been nothing to prevent him from remaining to collect carts, as he was urged to do by some of the English residents Moreover, his brain must have been extraordinarily confused, if he did not see the glaring inconsistency between his apology and his own subsequent conduct.

gratulated as a hero That Canning should have accepted Halliday's view of Money's conduct was natural enough. but that Halliday, acquainted as he was with the terms of the withdrawal order and with the way in which Money had carried it out, should have praised the latter as he did, might well startle those who were ignorant of the circumstances that had tended to warp his judgment Nor did he content himself with bestowing empty praise upon Money The man who had fled in panic from his post was rewarded by promotion to a more lucrative appointment * Of Money himself it is not necessary to speak so severely Though his whole conduct from the time that he received the withdrawal order had been a series of mistakes, yet it is impossible not to feel sympathy for a man who, when his conscience told him that he had done wrong, tried, however awkwardly, to amend his fault

Review of Tayler's conduct

As, however, Money had been substantially rewarded for the defective discharge of an easy duty, surely Tayler might reasonably look forward at least to the approbation of his Government He had undoubtedly saved his own Division, and, as the rebellion which he held in check would almost certainly have spread throughout Bengal if it had been allowed to develop itself, he may be said to have saved Bengal as well † If some great disturbance had broken out in Patna, and he had suppressed it, his praises would have been sung as loudly as those of anyone else but, as he simply prevented disaffection from breaking out at all in one of the most disaffected cities of India, there was too little of the sensational in his achieve-

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* *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857–58), Part 2, pp 154–6, 227–32, 327–8, 412, *Correspondence, &c*, pp 119, 122, 137–8

† This, of course, is only a conjecture But it is a conjecture in support of which a great deal may be said The records of what actually took place in Bengal during the Mutiny, the circumstances of its connexion with the English Government before the Mutiny, and the peaceful character of the greater portion of its inhabitants make it certain that popular disturbance would never have been so formidable there as it was in the North-Western Provinces Still, the whole history of the Mutiny proves that, if insurrection had been allowed to come to a head in Behar, not only would the budmashes and all the disaffected in the rest of Bengal have seized the opportunity to do mischief, but even the peaceful, the well disposed, and those who may be called the Trimmers would have been tempted by the fear that it was no longer worth their while to support us, to turn against us See an extract from a Lecture delivered by Iltudus Pritchard, Esq, printed in *What is Truth?* p 63, and a letter from General Colin Mackenzie quoted in *Fact v Falsehood.*

ments to excite general enthusiasm The English inhabitants of his province, indeed, and the natives who remained loyal to his Government respected and trusted him absolutely * But Halliday had an old grudge against him Halliday had repaid his services by a withdrawal of the support which each one of his subordinates had a right to claim he had vouchsafed not a word of praise to encourage him in his labours he had once before suggested a frivolous pretext for removing him from his post, and now, eagerly clutching at the withdrawal order as an excuse for carrying out his resolve, without waiting for explanation or defence, he stigmatised this last and noblest measure of his lieutenant as an act of disgraceful cowardice, and summarily removed him from his post, thus depriving his country of the services of the ablest, the most successful, and the most trusted civil officer in Bengal, and blasting all his hopes, his aspirations, and his ambitions Nothing could exceed the sympathy which the loyal inhabitants of Behar showed to him in his trouble "When," wrote the non-official Christian residents of Patna, "the whole of Patna was nearly shipwrecked, at the moment when the rebels rose at Dinapore, and before that, when the mischievous machinations of Peer Ali and his accomplices had endangered not only our own city, but nearly the whole province, who opposed and braved the storm? Whose were those wise, far-seeing, and statesman-like plans which saved us then? and who so kindly and considerately threw open his house to receive the Christian populace at the hour of the greatest peril? With one voice we answer it was you, and were it not for you, and for your exertions, which cost you many an anxious day and sleepless night, Behar would ere this have become a scene of anarchy and confusion "†

Halliday dismisses Tayler

* Except a "small clique" mentioned by Dr Duff See numerous letters in *What is Truth?* Also letters in the *Englishman*, July 4, 10, 11, 17, Aug 8, Sept 8, 9, 12, 14, 16, 21, 30, Oct 1, 2, 8, 12

† See *What is Truth?* If Halliday had not been in such a hurry to get rid of Tayler, he might have reflected on the inconsistency of condemning him for issuing the withdrawal order, and praising Money for the way in which he had acted upon it If the order proved cowardice on Tayler's part, it was equally cowardly of Money to run away from his station as precipitately as he did If the danger to which Money was exposed was so great as to justify him in running away without his treasure, the existence of that danger furnished an unanswerable proof of the wisdom of Tayler's order

For the benefit of anyone who wishes to investigate independently the

It was not, however, to be expected that public opinion would induce Halliday to admit that he had been in the wrong. He had already misrepresented the purport of the withdrawal order to the Governor-General and Council, who, on garbled and one-sided evidence, were led to record a censure upon Tayler.* In a Blue Book which he published upon the case, he suppressed a mass of important correspondence which would have helped to place the facts in their true light. Lastly, in a minute which he despatched to the Directors in 1858, to explain his reasons for dismissing Tayler, he suppressed two letters written on the 8th of June, 1857, in which Tayler had given him full information of the danger to which Patna was exposed from the intended mutiny of the Dinapore sepoys, and another written by himself in reply, in which he had declared, in the face of this information, that Patna was in no danger, and that the mutiny of the Dinapore sepoys was inconceivable.†

Subsequent conduct of Halliday.

question of the withdrawal order, I give the following references: *Correspondence, &c.*, pp. 114–26, 128–50, 154–5, 162–8, 186–9; Taylor's *Memorial*, pp. 4, 5, 9–16; and his Reply to Halliday's Minute, pp. 31–5. I may mention that the majority of the district officials, including McDonell, whom Halliday would hardly have accused of cowardice, were grateful for the order. The gist of Halliday's arguments was that there had been no immediate probability of an attack upon Gya and Mozufferpore. He forgot that it had been probable that the attack would take place as early as the apparently imminent fall of Arah would allow. The whole question lies in a nut-shell. If Eyre had failed to relieve Arah, even Halliday would not have ventured to question the wisdom of the order. And did Halliday venture to say that Tayler would have been justified in staking his people's lives and the Government property on the bare chance, as it seemed, of Eyre's succeeding? No,—for he never attempted seriously to grapple with Tayler's arguments.

* *Correspondence, &c.*, pp. 123–7; *Narrative of Events*, pp. 200–18; Tayler's *Memorial*, pp. 33–5.

† These are grave charges. They will be found fully substantiated in Tayler's pamphlet, *Further Disclosures*, in his Reply to Halliday's Minute, pp. 48–9, 66–8, and in his *Memorial*, pp. 25–9. Anyone who wishes for further proof need only compare the special Blue Book already quoted, entitled *Correspondence, &c.*, with the *Parl. Papers*. Among the letters omitted from the special Blue Book was one written on the 28th of May to Tayler by Halliday, in which he said, "As soon as the telegraph is open I request you will send me a daily message, brief, just to say 'All's well,' till further notice." In accordance with the desire thus expressed, Tayler sent short demi-official and official letters and telegrams for some weeks. About the 30th of June he received an order (dated the 25th) to write official letters regularly. He obeyed. But the letters in the special Blue Book are arranged with such marvellous ingenuity, such convenient disregard for the sequence

By this concealment of evidence he obviously intended not only to prevent the exposure of his own want of statesmanship, but also to establish the charge, which he had brought against Tayler, of withholding information from Government, a charge which the production of that evidence would have shown to be untrue

Though, however, for the moment he had gained a triumph condemned by every honest man in India who knew the facts of the case,* there was a Nemesis in store for him Time gave judgment between him and his victim For a few years the latter could only submit with what patience he could command to the cruel injustice which he had suffered The differences between himself and his Government remained as yet within the sphere of opinion Long ago, indeed, the Dinapore mutiny, which Halliday had pronounced "inconceivable," had taken place but he could still plausibly assert that Tayler was absurdly wrong in maintaining that there had been danger at Patna, for had not Patna remained quiet when every other station was disturbed? The very perfection of Tayler's administration gave Halliday a handle against him But in 1864 and 1865 an extraordinary series of events occurred, which proved indisputably the sagacity of Tayler and the blindness of Halliday In 1863 a frontier war broke out, which was generally considered the result of a secret anti-Christian crusade preached by the

Nemesis

of dates, as to make it appear to any but the most careful reader that he contumaciously persisted for some time in writing demi officially

It is not my business to describe the various measures by which Halliday completed his victory It ought, however, to be mentioned that, after Tayler had refuted the charge on which he had been ostensibly removed from his post, Halliday sent a long list of *ex-post facto* charges against him, without allowing him to see them, to the Directors Although their minds were prejudiced by the concealment of evidence mentioned in the text, and still more by the fact that Tayler had not been allowed the opportunity of defending himself, they acquitted him of all the charges but two, and expressed their cordial approval of his general administration Halliday published the unfavourable and suppressed the favourable portion of their despatch The two remaining charges were refuted by Tayler but Halliday secretly withheld his refutation, on the plea that it was contumacious, until it was too late to send it See Halliday's Minute, *Narrative of Events*, and Tayler's *Memorial*

* See letters from General Le Grand Jacob, Sir Arthur Cotton, General Colin Mackenzie, Dr Duff, Hon E Drummond, R Vicars Boyle, General Sir Sydney Cotton, Sir Vincent Eyre, &c, and extracts from articles from Indian newspapers, published in Tayler's pamphlets

Wahabees of Patna An elaborate trial, held at Umballah in the following year, proved the justice of the suspicion, and three of the prisoners were sentenced to death But this was not all In 1865 the notorious Ahmed-Oollah, the chief of the three Wahabees whom Tayler had arrested in 1857, was brought to trial at Patna on the same charge, and convicted The arch-traitor, whom Tayler's successor, with Halliday's approval, had called an innocent and inoffensive "bookman," against whom there was no cause of suspicion, and whom Halliday himself had openly petted and made much of, was sent to the Andaman Islands as a convicted felon *

1864

Now that at last he had the evidence of hard facts to support him, Tayler drew up a memorial on his case, and showed it to Sir John Lawrence, then Viceroy of India, who advised him to present it to the Home Government, without submitting it to the Council at Calcutta The meaning of this advice was obvious For one of Halliday's closest friends Sir William Grey, was a member of the Council Tayler accordingly went home, and laid his memorial before Sir Stafford Northcote, the Secretary for India Soon afterwards Sir Stafford Northcote wrote to him, warmly praising all his principal acts, but regretting that he could not recommend him to the Queen for honours, as the Viceroy, to whom he had referred, had suggested two errors of judgment in his administration, namely, withholding information from Government, and issuing the withdrawal order † With the sanction of Sir Stafford Northcote, who was just about to leave office, Tayler submitted to his successor, the Duke of Argyll, an elaborate refutation of the suggested errors But perhaps the official duties of the new Secretary, or his philosophical labours were too pressing to allow him to redress the wrongs of a persecuted man Anyhow he made not the smallest use of the memorial entrusted to him. And, when his successor, Lord Salisbury, was appealed to, he replied that "it was impossible to reopen the case owing to the great length of time which had elapsed" Then Tayler sub-

Tayler's struggle for redress

* There is good reason to believe that he solaced himself in his captivity by contriving the plot to which Lord Mayo fell a victim. *Fact v Falsehood*, pp 32-6

† Reply to Halliday's Minute, pp 24-5

mitted his case to another Secretary, Lord Cranbrook He might fairly hope that now justice would be at last done him For not only had the Court of Directors cordially praised him, not only had the Press unanimously supported him, not only had two successive historians of the Indian Mutiny warmly eulogised his administration, not only had a great company of Indian officers and civilians declared to him their conviction that his resolute statesmanship had saved Behar, but two ex-members of Canning's Council had written to him, in generous repentance, to retract the censure which they had joined in passing upon him, and to add their testimony to the value of his services * Yet even Lord Cranbrook was unmoved He could not, he said, "constitute himself a Court of Appeal from three of his predecessors" To crown all, when Tayler's supporters were preparing to bring his case before Parliament, the memorial which he had submitted to the Duke of Argyll, and which would have exposed the dishonesty with which his antagonist had suppressed important evidence, was found to have mysteriously disappeared from the India Office !† Thus, after twenty years of weary waiting, justice was denied, nay even investigation was refused

But William Tayler never knew when he was beaten The struggle is still undecided, and, in the eyes of the world, the combatants hold very different positions The former Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal is now Sir Frederick Halliday, Knight Commander of the Bath and Member of the Council of India The former Commissioner of Patna is a private gentleman, undecorated and unnoticed by his Government But he is still the same man who overawed the Mahometan conspirators and protected the Christians of Patna, he has still unshaken confidence in British justice, he still maintains his honourable battle, and, though victory seems almost hopeless, he still has a strong consolation of which no injustice can rob him For he knows that he saved Bengal

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* The letter from Sir John Low is to be found in the *Selection of Letters from Distinguished Indian Statesmen*, an extract from the one from Dorin in *What is Truth?* p 46

† See a sheet printed by Mr Tayler, entitled *Last Words* Besides the *Memorial*, several other important documents connected with the case had disappeared.

CHAPTER VII.

BENARES AND ALLAHABAD.

The line between Calcutta and Delhi

WHILE Canning, in the days that followed the outbreak at Meerut, was preparing to strike the great blow at Delhi which, he believed, would instantly paralyse the revolt, he could not but feel anxious for the safety of the vast tract of country that lay between that city and Calcutta For, while dense masses of sepoys were crowded at the stations along the Ganges and the Jumna, a single British regiment at Agra, another at Dinapore, which the irresolution of the Government condemned to inaction, and a few invalided soldiers were the only force available to hold them in check If the sepoys had known how to use their opportunity, they might have prevented the passage of the reinforcements destined to succour Cawnpore and Lucknow nay, they might have swept down the valley of the Ganges, seized Allahabad, Benares, and Patna, and, gathering strength on their way till their numbers had become irresistible, destroyed every trace of European civilisation, and massacred every European till they had reached the frontiers of Eastern Bengal But, during the three precious weeks that followed the 10th of May, they remained absolutely passive Perhaps, as has been suggested,* the outbreak at Meerut frustrated a carefully matured plot for a simultaneous rising on the 31st of May, and thus disconcerted them. Perhaps they simply lacked the sagacity or the resolution to strike in time

* See Appendix B

The first important point on the line of the Ganges beyond the Bengal frontier, was Benares The troops who were being conveyed up the river from Calcutta to grapple with mutiny and rebellion were in no mood to look out for the beauties of the scenery but even their grim thoughts must have been distracted for a moment by the first sight of the Holy City Shooting past a little promontory, the steamer entered a broad crescent-shaped reach, which, sparkling in the sunlight, washed the curved shore like a miniature bay For two miles along the left bank a succession of broad flights of steps descended into the water, and upon them swarmed multitudes of preachers, pilgrims, worshippers, loungers, and bathers clad in dresses of many colours The mellow music of a hundred bells resounded above the hum of human voices. From the steps rose, tier above tier, pagodas, mosques, round towers and arches covered with fantastic decorations, long pillared arcades, balustraded terraces, noble mansions with carved balconies, and gardens rich with the dark green foliage of tamarinds and banians, and high above the highest, perpetuating the humiliation which their founder had inflicted upon the idolatrous city, soared the two stately minarets of the mosque of Aurungzebe *

Benares

Although the dynasty of the persecuting Emperor had been humiliated in its turn, the Hindoos of the city were as ready as they had ever been to resent the slightest rumour of an insult against the sanctity of their religion The influence of an army of priests made Benares as dangerous a stronghold of Brahminical as Patna was of Mahometan fanaticism Moreover, a rise in the price of corn unfortunately occurred at this very time to exasperate the habitual discontent of its inhabitants, and it was to be feared that the state prisoners of every nation who had been condemned to pass their lives within its walls would seize the first opportunity to sow sedition against the English While, therefore, the geographical position of the city, its wealth, and the fact that it was the capital of a large Division, caused general anxiety to be felt for its safety, it was seen that no place was more exposed to danger The military force, which was quartered at the cantonment, about three miles from the city inland, consisted of a mere handful of English artillerymen, and three native regiments,

* Prinsep's *Benares Illustrated*, Roberts's *Hindostan* vol ii pp 54, 56

the 37th Native Infantry, the Loodhianah Sikhs, and the 13th Irregular Cavalry The native infantry were of course distrusted but the Sikhs were believed to be staunch, and here, as elsewhere, it was hoped that the irregulars, better disciplined and officered than the rest of the army, would remain true to their salt

Frederic Gubbins.

Among the English officials there was fortunately a man who had an extraordinary power of dealing with Asiatics This was the Judge, Frederic Gubbins Entering upon his office six years before, he had rapidly introduced a new system of draining and lighting the squalid streets, in spite of the prejudices of the priest-ridden inhabitants, who feared that his measures portended an attack upon their religion * By thus successfully accomplishing what other officers had attempted in vain, Gubbins had established once for all such a dread of his power in the minds of the people that he was able now to attempt conciliatory measures which, coming from a weaker man, would have been attributed to fear. Noting the discontent which the high price of provisions was arousing, he exerted himself to convince the merchants that it would be their interest to avoid a riot by selling corn at as low a rate as possible He succeeded so well that a reduction of fifteen per cent was soon effected Henry

Tucker

Tucker, the Commissioner, was a man of a different stamp His strength lay rather in passive fortitude than in aggressive activity With a perversion of that reliance upon a Higher Power which supported the noblest heroes of the Mutiny, he seemed to suspect a want of faith in the active precautions which ordinary political wisdom suggested to others † It was not in this spirit that Havelock offered up his prayers to the God of battles But, if Tucker forgot the maxim, *Aide toi et ciel t'aidera*, he did not forget to aid his brethren in misfortune With a noble self-sacrifice in which his colleagues cheerfully supported him, he sent on every detachment of British troops which the Government had destined for the relief of Benares, to reinforce the garrison of Cawnpore Moreover, he hoped that, by refusing to avail himself of these succours, he would impress the people of Benares with the belief that he felt confident in the sufficiency of his

* *Red Pamphlet*, pp 86-7

† Kaye, vol ii pp 209-10

existing resources. And for a time, indeed, his hope seemed likely to be realised For three weeks after the news of the outbreak at Meerut reached him, he was able to report that all was quiet in his Division On the 4th of June, however, he learned that the Sepoy regiment at Azimgurh, sixty miles to the north, had mutinied, and that the civil officers of the station had confessed by their precipitate retreat that they were unable to uphold British authority * But by his time an officer had come to his support who knew that the Indian Mutiny could only be quelled by the most stern and instant action

Mutiny at Azimgurh

Among those who arrived in Calcutta towards the end of May in answer to Canning's appeal, was Colonel James Neill of the 1st Madras Fusiliers In a military career of thirty years, most of which had been spent in India, this officer had given many proofs that he was a born ruler of men Serving against Russia with the Anglo-Turkish Contingent, he had shown that it was possible to rough-hew savage Bashi-Bazouks into disciplined soldiers †, and the splendid regiment which he now brought with him to Calcutta owed its efficiency to his devotion Canning recognised him at once as a man for the crisis, and entrusted him with the work of securing Benares and Allahabad, and relieving Cawnpore Indeed it required no subtle power of analysis to understand the nature of Colonel Neill Tender and loving to those dear to him, merciful to the weak, and ever ready to sacrifice his own comfort for the well-being of his soldiers, he was a staunch friend, but a terrible enemy No responsibility could appal him No obstacle could stop him No perplexities could dazzle the clear mental vision with which he instantly discerned the true bearings of every question of immediate action When, in his quarters at Madras, he heard of the first beginnings of mutiny, and thought that God might call him to take his part in its suppression, he startled a brother officer by saying that he "felt fully equal to any extent of professional employment or responsibility which could ever devolve upon him" But, when his friend looked up into his eyes, and saw the quiet but earnest expression of his stern face, he knew that

James Neill

* *Parl Papers*, vol xviii (1859) p 25, vol xxx (1857), pp 344-6, 348, 352, 354, 357, 359, 362, 365, 368, 380, 385, 392, 395, *Times*, Aug 6, 1857

† Kaye's *Lives of Indian Officers*, vol ii pp 361-3

there was no arrogance, but well-founded self-reliance in the words which he had heard *

How he dealt with the railway officials at Calcutta

Their truth was signally proved, even before Neill had left Calcutta It was arranged that a detachment of the Fusiliers should proceed up the Ganges by steamer, while Neill himself should follow with the rest by train Arriving at the station with a few of his men some minutes before the main body, which had been unavoidably detained, he was told by the station-master that the train was already late, and would be started at once without waiting for the absentees, and, when he remonstrated, a crowd of other officials came up, and did their best to silence him But he soon showed them what manner of man they had to deal with Putting the station-master, the engineer, and the stoker under arrest, he waited till all the Fusiliers had arrived, and did not release his prisoners until he had seen every man safe in his place † This single incident satisfied the Christians whom Neill was hastening to succour They knew that the right man had come at last

He arrives at Benares

On the 3rd of June Neill arrived in Benares with a detachment of his regiment About sixty more, and a hundred and fifty of the 10th from Dinapore had preceded him On the following day the news of the Azimgurh mutiny arrived, and, as it was certain that the sepoys at Benares would catch the infection, Brigadier Ponsonby, who commanded the station, went to Neill's quarters, to consult him on the expediency of disarming the 37th Fifteen years before, Ponsonby had won his spurs in the wonderful onslaught on Dost Mahomed's cavalry at Purwan-durrah It is easier, however, to lead even a Balaclava charge than to quell a mutiny Ponsonby wished to put off the business of disarming till the morrow But delay was an abomination to Neill He persuaded Ponsonby that the thing ought to be done that very evening Accordingly Colonel Spottiswoode, who commanded the 37th, proceeded to turn out his men, and ordered them to lay down their arms They were quietly obeying when suddenly the European troops were seen coming on to the ground, and a panic seized the whole regiment Those who had laid down their muskets ran to take them up

June 4

The crisis

* Kaye's *Lives of Indian Officers*, vol ii pp 366-7 † *Ib*

again, and, with the others, began to fire upon the British Some men of the 10th fell but the rest returned the fire, and the artillery, under Captain William Olpherts, poured in a shower of grape among the mutineers And now, as Ponsonby, who had throughout been suffering grievously from the fierce heat of the sun, appeared to be losing all power of mind and body, Neill went up to him and said, "General, I assume command" At this moment the Sikhs, who were advancing from behind to support the Europeans, were startled by the noise of firing in their rear One of the Irregulars had fired at his commanding officer, and the Sikhs, not disloyal in intention, but confused, and apprehensive of treachery, rushed wildly against the artillerymen Olpherts had but just time to wheel his guns round, and fire His swift action saved Benares, for the Sikhs, staggering under a fearful discharge of grape, broke and fled after the 37th, and Neill, promptly pursuing them, completed the victory *

The din of battle, resounding from the parade-ground, warned the Christian residents that mutiny had broken out Most of the missionaries fled A motley throng of civilians, women, and children took refuge on the roof of the Collector's cutcherry Even after the Mutiny had been suppressed, danger was still to be apprehended from the townspeople and from the revengeful fury of a detachment of Sikhs, who had been placed as a guard over the Government treasure That this danger was averted was partly due to the active loyalty of a knot of influential natives Foremost among these was a Sikh sirdar, Soorut Singh, who, during a long residence as a state prisoner in Benares, had learned to appreciate the character

* Kaye's *Lives of Indian Officers*, pp 368–70, *Parl Papers*, vol xxx (1857) pp 479–80, vol xviii (1859) p 32, *Times*, Aug 18, 25, 1857, p 6, col 4 Tucker informed the Governor-General that the disarming had been very badly managed, and some of the officers of the 37th complained that their men had been foully used Montgomery Martin goes further, and maintains that to disarm at all was a mistake The disarming was certainly mismanaged, probably because it was undertaken without due preparation, and, as Ponsonby asserted in a letter to the *Times* (Aug 18, 1857), that he conducted the whole business, he must bear the blame But those who were best qualified to judge believed that, if the regiment had not been disarmed, it would have mutinied on the night of June 4 It is to be regretted, of course, that well-intentioned sepoys were slaughtered, but, when once they had thrown in their lot with their comrades, their slaughter was inevitable See Montgomery-Martin, vol ii pp 233–5, Kaye, vol ii. pp 226–8, *Parl Papers*, vol xviii (1859) p 32

of Gubbins, and now, accompanying him to the cutcherry, which was in danger of being burned by the infuriated Sikhs, not only quieted them by explaining that the attack on their comrades had been unpremeditated, but even won them over to a loyal discharge of their duties Not less faithful to Gubbins were his Nazir,* Pundit Gokool-Chund, a rich Hindoo noble named Deonerain Singh, and the titular Rajah of Benares himself, who all did good service in allaying the excitement of the populace, and rescuing Christians from their fury About two o'clock in the morning, the party at the cutcherry was removed under an escort to the Mint, which was better fitted for defence Huddling together on the roof, they fell asleep at last from sheer exhaustion The first sight that met their eyes when they awoke was a row of gallowses, on which Neill was busily hanging batches of mutineers as fast as they were brought in † Soon afterwards he received a message from the Government, ordering him to hurry on to Allahabad Instantly he telegraphed back—"Can't move wanted here"‡ By the 6th he was able to report that the cantonments were safe § Thus within Benares itself order was re-established and maintained Tucker, who knew that he at least had contributed nothing to this result, ascribed it to miracle but the baffled rebels would have told him that it was due to the vigour of Neill and Gubbins, and the loyal co-operation of four native gentlemen Anyhow, no miracle was vouchsafed to keep the country population quiet The story of the slaughter at Benares drove another detachment of the Sikhs at Jaunpore to rebel on the following day, and stimulated the villagers to fling off and trample under foot every vestige of British authority Then Tucker bestirred himself to ask Canning for leave to give his chief civil officers power of life and death The Governor-General, however, had already issued an order placing the Division of Benares under martial law Some of the officers used their power with indiscriminate ferocity Lads who had been guilty of

June 5

Mutiny at Jaunpore Anarchy in the districts

June 9

* An official who issues processes, keeps the roll of witnesses and announces their arrival, makes out lists of unclaimed property and stray cattle, and carries out public sales by the Courts' order, just outside the cutcherry

† *Times*, Aug 25, 1857, p 6, col 4

‡ Mead.

§ *Parl. Papers*, vol. xxx (1857), p 480.

nothing worse than waving rebel colours and beating tom-toms, were summarily executed Gentlemen volunteered to serve as hangmen, and gloried in the skill with which they disposed of their victims But mere executions, however severe, were not enough to restore British authority Bands of dacoits began to infest the country, and parties of dispersed sepoys continued to attack isolated posts

On the 9th of June* Neill found himself able to push on for Allahabad Standing at the south-eastern point of the Doab, where the sparkling stream of the Jumna loses itself in the turbid waters of the Ganges, that city commanded both the river and road communication between the upper and lower provinces of Northern India, while its grand, massive fort, stored with ammunition, and bristling with guns, offered an invaluable prize to the daring of the mutineers Moreover, its natural importance had of late been greatly increased by the annexation of Oude, to the southern frontier of which it served as a protection Thus it is not too much to say that the safety of the entire North-West hung upon the preservation of Allahabad Ellenborough and Charles Napier, recognising its importance, had always kept it strongly garrisoned by Europeans but their successors had neglected it†; and, though Outram had warned Canning to provide for its safety, there was not a single British soldier within its walls at the outset of the Mutiny ‡ It was not till the Christian inhabitants had been roused by the outbreak at Meerut to point out the defencelessness of their position that sixty invalid artillerymen were sent from Chunar to reinforce them § The news which startled the English residents stirred up the latent disaffection of the discontented Mahometan population, many of whom were fallen nobles who cursed the Government which had brought them to the dust || Here, as elsewhere, there were rumours of treacherous designs of the Government

Allahabad

* *Parl Papers*, vol xxx (1857), p 455

† *Red Pamphlet*, p 93

‡ "Had the precautions I proposed been adopted," wrote Outram, "a European regiment must have been retained at Cawnpore to supply the Allahabad garrison, and General Wheeler's party would have been saved" Goldsmid's *Life of Outram*, vol ii p 123

§ *Red Pamphlet*, pp 93–4

|| "The existence of a Mahometan conspiracy to exterminate the English was now (May 31) a matter of notoriety" *Calcutta Review*, July to Dec 1858 Article, "A District during a Rebellion," p 59

against the religion of their subjects Yet here too, as elsewhere, the native troops were trusted by their commanders One regiment especially, the 6th Native Infantry, was the pride and delight of the colonel and his officers, who had ever shown an affectionate interest in all that concerned the welfare of their men And now the men in their turn seemed eager to show themselves worthy of their officers On the 19th of May the entire regiment volunteered to march against Delhi Meanwhile the excitement of the populace, though it became more intense after the great Mahometan festival of the Eed, had not developed into insurrection. Yet all this time the chief civilians felt ill at ease, for they knew that the populace would rise at once if the sepoys should mutiny, and they could not regard the sepoys with that confidence which old associations had fostered in the hearts of the officers *

May 25

On the 4th of June the telegraph brought the news of the events that had just passed at Benares Feeling sure that the mutineers whom Neill had driven out of that station must be marching against Allahabad, the magistrate begged Colonel Simpson of the 6th to send a company of his regiment with two guns to guard the bridge by which the rebels would have to cross the Ganges Simpson consented, and at the same time detached a party of irregular cavalry to defend the cantonments The magistrate, who had never trusted the native troops, may have only advised the former measure as a forlorn hope but even now, with the story of the Benares mutiny before him, Simpson retained his faith in his own regiment Nay two days later, he paid no heed to a warning which he received from a non-commissioned officer of his regiment, telling him that the news from Benares had dangerously excited the men At sunset on that day he paraded the troops in order to read them a letter from the Governor-General, thanking the 6th for their offer to march against Delhi The sepoys listened with apparent satisfaction, and cheered like British soldiers More than ever convinced of the loyalty of their model regiment, Simpson and his officers rode off the parade-ground to mess But the men did not feel that their day's work was over An order had just

June 6

* *Calcutta Review*, July to Dec, 1858 Article, "A District during a Rebellion," p 59, *Parl Papers*, vol xxx (1857), p 306

been issued for the removal of the guns stationed at the bridge to the fort, where they might be more needed, and, when Lieutenant Harward, the officer on duty, was preparing to move them, the sepoys chosen to form their escort defiantly asserted their resolve to take them to cantonments instead Harward hastened to warn Lieutenant Alexander of the Oude Irregulars to intercept the mutineers on their way to cantonments Alexander led out his men As soon as he saw his enemy, he called upon them to follow him and recover the guns but only three rode to the attack the rest went over to the sepoys, and the gallant Alexander fell, shot through the heart Then the sepoys ran with their new friends to the lines, and, when the deluded officers hurried up to recall their men to obedience, they were answered by a volley of musketry, beneath which five fell Among the other victims of the model regiment were seven young cadets, who had only just arrived from England Night had now set in, and the mutineers sallied out into the city, to seek new fields of crime First they broke open the gaol, and let loose a swarm of miscreants to aid them in their work And now the magistrate's fears were realised The populace followed the example of the sepoys, and mutiny was merged in sedition Every Christian who had not found refuge in the fort was murdered every Christian home was plundered and burned the timid Bengalee pilgrims, who had come to worship at the famous shrine of the Pryag, were robbed and threatened by the Mahometans, to whom they were scarcely less odious than the Christians themselves the shops and the warehouses were rifled the railway-works were destroyed the telegraph wires were torn down, and the locomotive engines, which the ignorant rebels feared to approach, were bombarded Worst of all, sixteen hundred bullocks, which the Commissariat had collected for the transport service of the column destined for the relief of Cawnpore, were driven off Within a few hours the authority of the English in Allahabad was overthrown, and a green flag, waving over the Kotwallee, proclaimed the restored supremacy of Islam.

The mutiny and its consequences.

But the fort still sheltered a few Europeans, and told the Mahometans that their authority was not universally recognised Yet even the fort must have fallen, if it had not been for the great qualities of an infantry captain who had once been a private soldier. The garrison consisted of the invalid

artillerymen, about a hundred European volunteers, a company of the sepoy regiment which had just mutinied, and a detachment of Sikhs who had lately heard of the slaughter of their countrymen at Benares It seemed almost certain that the sepoys and the Sikhs would now unite and turn upon their masters In this extremity Captain Brasyer of the Sikhs forced his men to support him in disarming the sepoys, while the artillerymen, port-fires in hand, stood at the guns, ready to destroy the first man who disobeyed orders The sepoys saw that they must give way, and, piling their arms at Brasyer's order, trooped out of the fort to join their comrades *

All night long the English, standing on the ramparts of the fort, were forced to listen to the yells of the budmashes, who were making havoc of their possessions, and watch the flames and lurid smoke ascending from their ruined homes Next day they were cheered by the arrival of a detachment of Fusiliers, whom Neill had sent on in advance Even with this reinforcement, however, they were still too weak to re-establish their authority in the town And now the example of the townspeople was being followed by the people of the surrounding country The infection of mutiny and rebellion travelled westward to the station of Futtehpore, and Robert Tucker, the judge, standing his ground alone after every other European had fled, refusing to purchase life by apostatising to Mahometanism, was murdered on the roof of the cutcherry after he had himself slain some fourteen of his assailants On the western bank of the Jumna, indeed, a few influential rajahs found their interest in keeping the people submissive to British rule† but the villagers on the eastern side of the Ganges, and the Brahmins and Mahometan landowners of the Doab openly flung off the yoke The state of things was much the same as that which has been described as prevalent in the districts round Agra and Meerut, and in Rohilcund Every man did that which was right in his own eyes Old grudges were avenged Boundary marks were removed Rich capitalists were driven out of the estates which

June 7

* Marshman's *Memoirs of Sir H Havelock*, p 270, *Times*, Aug 25, 1857, p 6, col 3, Aug 26, p 7, col 2, Mead, pp 131-3, *Calcutta Review*, July to Dec 1858, p 60

† "They were wise enough to see that a servile war, an uprising of the lower against the higher classes would not answer their purpose" *Calcutta Review*, July to Dec 1858, p 64

they had bought under the Sale Law Villagers impartially robbed each other and the Government Internecine war raged Meanwhile in Allahabad itself a Mahometan, who had presented himself to the people as a prophet endowed by heaven with miraculous powers, was keeping alive the awakened hatred of the English name Even in the fort the demon of disorder was rampant The Sikhs found abundant stores of wine, brandy, rum, and beer in the cellars of the merchants, and sold all that they could not drink themselves to the Europeans Men supposed to be on duty were to be seen staggering on the ramparts, so drunk that they could not hold their muskets Many of the volunteers soon became as demoralised as the Sikhs, and joined them in plundering the houses of inoffensive traders, and smashing their furniture But the reign of anarchy was doomed For Neill was fast hurrying up from Benares, and on the 11th of June he entered the fort with forty of his men "Thank God, Sir," said the sentry who admitted him, "you 'll save us yet." *

Neill arrives and restores order.

The sentry was right "On assuming command," wrote Neill a few days later, "I at once determined to drive the enemy away, and open up some communication with the country" Accordingly, on the morning of the 12th, he bombarded the suburban village of Daraogunj, expelled the mob of insurgents who occupied it, burned part of it to the ground, and won back the bridge, which the rebels had seized The Fusiliers were so exhausted by their rapid journey from Benares and the intense heat that they could hardly walk but the force of their passions sustained them, and, with reckless ferocity, they destroyed every native whom they could catch Reinforced on the following day by a fresh detachment, a hundred strong, Neill resolved to put a stop to the disorder in the fort Directly after his arrival, he had paraded the volunteers, and, severely reprimanding them for their disgraceful misconduct, had threatened to eject from the fort the first who should offend again He now proceeded to buy up all the plundered liquor, and destroyed the rest He found it less easy to dispose of the Sikhs,

June 13

June 14.

* *Calcutta Review*, July to Dec 1858, pp 63–4, *Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, 4 July 1857, pp 569–70, *Times*, Aug 25, 1857, p 6 col 3, *Lives of Indian Officers*, vol ii p 373, Montgomery-Martin, vol. i pp 296–7, 316

who had passed entirely beyond the control of their officers but Brasyer, who knew the ruling passion of his men, with great tact persuaded them that, by taking up their quarters outside the fort, they would be in a better position for plundering the rebel zemindars

Now that order had been restored within the fort, Neil had a secure base for his operations against the city and the surrounding country Causing the fort guns to open fire on the suburban villages, he sent out parties of Fusiliers, Sikhs, and Irregulars, who swept over the country, and scattered rebels and mutineers in all directions A detachment of Fusiliers went up the river in a steamer, throwing shot right and left, and firing every village that they passed A portion of the native town was set on fire, and volleys of grape and canister were showered into the inhabitants, as they ran from the flames Meanwhile another detachment had started from Benares to reopen the line of communication, and was burning rebel villages, and hanging rebel zemindars as it pursued its way By the 18th the districts were absolutely mastered The work of retribution, however, was not over, and some of those who took part in it, maddened by the outrages which had been inflicted upon their countrymen, recked little whom they slew, so long as they could slay someone Volunteers and Sikhs sallied out of the fort into the streets, and slaughtered every native who crossed their path A civilian boasted that a commission of which he was chief had hung eight or ten men a day, and wrote home a graphic account of the disgusting details of their execution * The system of burning villages, right and politic when pursued with discrimination, was in many instances fearfully abused Old men who had done us no harm, helpless women with sucking infants at their breasts, felt the weight of our vengeance no less than the vilest malefactors, and, as they wandered forth from their blazing huts, they must have cursed us as bitterly as we cursed the murderers of Cawnpore But to the honour of Neill let it be recorded that to him the infliction of punishment was not a delight, but an awful duty "God

June 15

* Abundant proof of all that I have said in the text about the nature of our reprisals is to be found in letters to English and Indian newspapers written by men who acted in or witnessed the scenes which they described, in the *Parl Papers*, and in the pages of Montgomery-Martin, who devoted special attention to the subject

grant," he wrote on the 17th, "I may have acted with justice. I know I have with severity, but under all the circumstances I trust for forgiveness"* On the same day the magistrate returned to the Kotwallee Not a finger was raised against him In fact, Neill had inspired the populace with such terror that a rumour arose that the English were going to bombard the city, and many of the citizens fled with their families into the country † At no epoch of history has individual character achieved more extraordinary results than in the course of the Indian Mutiny

The cholera

By this time, however, toil and privation, incessant excitement, bad and scanty food, and intemperate drinking, had told upon the health of the British soldiers On the 18th cholera broke out among them There were no means of mitigating its horrors Punkahs and medicines were almost entirely wanting Eight men were buried before midnight Twenty more died next day The shrieks of the sufferers were so appalling that two ladies in a room over the hospital died of fright ‡

What Neill had done, and what he hoped to do

Still, the first of the great objects for which Neill had left Calcutta had been gained Within a few days he had paralysed the insurgent population of a crowded city and a wide district, and had rebuilt the shattered fabric of British authority He had done this while labouring under a physical weakness that would have prostrated many energetic men But nothing could overcome the resolute heart of Neill When he arrived in Allahabad, after a week of ceaseless activity and anxiety at Benares, he had felt almost dying from complete exhaustion, but "yet," he wrote to his wife, "I kept up heart." Unable to move, barely able to sustain consciousness by taking repeated draughts of champagne and water, he had had himself carried into the batteries, and there, lying on his back, had directed every operation § And now he felt that his work was only begun For he knew that Lucknow was even then threatened by a mutinous soldiery, and that Cawnpore was hard pressed by the army of the Nana Sahib

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* Kaye, vol ii p 269, note

† *Ib*, p 298, *Daily News*, Aug 25, 1857, *Times*, Aug 25, 1857, p 6, col 3, *Parl Papers* vol xxx (1857), pp 545-6, 583

‡ *Ib*, pp 544, 555, *Times*, Aug 26 1857, p 6, col. 6

§ *Lives of Indian Officers*, vol ii pp 373-4

CHAPTER VIII.

CAWNPORE.

Cawnpore

Ever since the news of the seizure of Delhi had reached him, Canning had felt specially anxious for the safety of Cawnpore That city was the head-quarters of a Division, and, though its importance as a military station had been diminished by the annexation of the Punjaub, it was still a position of considerable value Four native regiments, the 2nd Cavalry, and the 1st, 53rd, and 56th Infantry, were assembled within its lines Yet the entire British force consisted of only fifty-nine artillerymen and a few invalids belonging to the 32nd Queen's Regiment To add to the difficulties of the position, the station was crowded by an unusually large non-combatant population

Cawnpore was situated forty-two miles south-west of Lucknow, on the southern bank of the Ganges The native town, with its dilapidated houses and narrow twisting streets swarming with busy traders and artisans and roving budmashes, lay about a mile from the river Around it stretched a dull, sandy plain. South-east of the town, and separated from it by a canal, were the native lines, long rows of mud hovels, thatched with straw Here, after morning parade, dusky warriors were to be seen loafing about in groups and gossiping, while others, squatting on the ground in the cool linen drawers which they had put on after flinging off their tight, uncomfortable uniforms, were placidly eating their rice Moving on, and skirting the north-eastern quarter of the town, the traveller would have come to the theatre, near which, on rising ground, stood the assembly rooms and the church with its white tower soaring

above a clump of trees. Looking down the strip of country that lay between the river and the town, and stretched for some miles beyond the latter, he would have seen the cantonments, a long, straggling line of brick houses coated with white paint, each standing in its own compound, a sort of paddock some three or four acres in extent, shut in by an untidy, crumbling mound and ditch The country was broken by ravines, and here and there among the bungalows native temples peeped out above clumps of trees The treasury, the gaol, and the magazine stood near the further extremity of the line Pinnaces with light, taper masts, and unwieldy country boats, looking like floating hay-stacks, lay moored close to the landing steps on the sacred river, and across the bridge of boats which spanned its broad flood, travellers were continually passing on their way to or from Lucknow *

In the spring of 1857 the English residents were leading the ordinary life of an Anglo-Indian community Morning rides, work in cutcherry or on parade, novel-reading, racquets, dinners, balls filled up the time Pretty women laughed and flirted, as they listened to the music of the band in the cool of the evening, and talked perhaps of the delightful balls which the Nana had given in his palace up the river, before he had started on that inexplicable tour Suddenly the news of the great disasters at Meerut and Delhi arrived, and the life of the little society was violently wrenched into a new channel †

Sir Hugh Wheeler

The commander of the Division was General Sir Hugh Wheeler When the Mutiny broke out, it was generally believed that, whoever else might fail, he would be equal to the occasion, for, though he was an old man, he had not lost his bodily vigour or his activity of mind, he had proved himself on many hard-fought fields to be a brave and determined soldier, and he was known to be acquainted with the character and to possess the confidence of the sepoys in an especial degree ‡ And in one respect at least he did stand out from the great mass of British officers He was not long beguiled by the pleasing fancy that

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* Mowbray-Thomson's *Story of Cawnpore*, pp 18–23, Hunter's *Imperial Gazetteer*, vol. vi p 81, Russell's *Diary in India*, vol i p 179, Miss Roberts's *Hindostan*, vol ii p 44, Trevelyan's *Cawnpore*, pp 5, 11–16, 65

† *Ib*, pp 13, 65, 74–5

‡ Mowbray-Thomson, p 140–1, *Red Pamphlet*, pp 123–4.

his men would remain faithful, though all around them should prove traitors On the contrary, soon after he received the news of the outbreak at Meerut, he saw that his regiments, though they did not slacken in the performance of their duty, were becoming possessed by an insane fear of the monstrous designs which the prevalent fables ascribed to the English, and might sooner or later be driven by sheer panic to revolt He therefore determined to lose no time in securing a place of refuge for those under his charge The most natural position to select was the magazine, a strong, roomy building, which, being surrounded by bullet-proof walls, and protected on one side by the river, was well fitted for defence Wheeler decided against it, however, on the ground that, before occupying it, he would be obliged to withdraw its sepoy guard, and thus inevitably precipitate a rising Moreover, though he feared that the native regiments would eventually mutiny, he had good reason to believe that they would hasten at once to join their comrades at Delhi Thinking, then, that he would only have to repel the possible attacks of a mob of undisciplined budmashes until succour should reach him, he contented himself with throwing up a weak entrenchment close to the native lines If, however, he had waited for the reinforcements which he was soon to receive, he might have seized the magazine with small loss, perhaps with none at all, for numberless examples have shown that the sepoy always bows down before the man who has the courage to take the initiative against him On the other hand, his apparently well-founded belief that, after the first outbreak of mutiny, the sepoys would hasten to Delhi as the focus of rebellion, instead of waiting to attack him, was a strong argument in favour of the course which he pursued Not many Anglo-Indian generals would have shown more judgment than this gallant veteran *

His selection of a place of refuge

While making these preparations for defence, he applied for reinforcements from Lucknow, and Henry Lawrence, though he himself had no superfluity of European troops, generously sent fifty men of the 32nd and a half battery of guns under Lieutenant

Reinforcements arrive. May 21.

* Trevelyan, pp 74–5, 115–6, *Cawnpore Massacre*, by W J Shepherd (one of the garrison), pp 8, 9, *Parl. Papers*, vol. xxx (1857), p 348, *Red Pamphlet*, pp 123–4 The question is fully discussed in App C

Ashe.* Unhappily, about the same time Wheeler stooped to court the good offices of another and less trustworthy ally The Government treasure at the suburb of Newabgunj was at the mercy of a guard of sepoys whom he distrusted, but who, he felt sure, would resist any attempt to withdraw it from their keeping He therefore resolved to ask the Nana to lend a body of his retainers for the protection of the treasury In vain was he warned by Lawrence and Martin Gubbins that it would be the height of folly to put any trust in one whose recent movements had laid him open to such grave suspicion He might, indeed, have retorted with some show of reason. For he had been led to believe that it would be possible to win the cordial support of the Nana by offering to procure for him that pension which had been so long withheld Besides, had not the Nana always lived on the most friendly terms with the English residents at Cawnpore? Had he not invited British officers to his table, played billiards with them, chatted with them, smoked with them? What reason then was there to regard him with suspicion? Might it not even be judicious to entrust the women of the garrison to his care? This last idea was not carried out, but on the 22nd the treasury was placed under his protection †

The treasury placed under the charge of the Nana Sahib

On the same day there was a general migration of non-combatants from the English quarter to the entrenchment The confusion and alarm which prevailed among them‡ were enough to suggest the idea of mutiny to men so quick to perceive and so ready to take advantage of any sign of fear as sepoys have always shown themselves to be On the 23rd, Wheeler telegraphed to Lawrence .—"It is almost certain that the troops will rise to-night" When, however, the Eed had passed by without an outbreak, he began to feel that the danger was over, and, in the warmth of his gratitude, even repaid the generosity of Lawrence by sending on to him a portion of the reinforcements which he had received from

The agony of suspense

May 24

June 3

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* Mowbray-Thomson, p 30, Gubbins, p 28 Kaye (vol ii p 296) says that 84 men of the 32nd were sent, but mentions in a note that Lawrence's military secretary set the number down at 50 So did Lawrence himself in a telegram dated May 23 *Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*

† Gubbins, p 31, Mowbray-Thomson, pp 32-3.

‡ Kaye, vol ii. pp 300-1

Benares The danger was not over There was sore anxiety in the hearts of the Christians Ladies whose husbands were required to sleep in the lines, hardly dared to hope, as they said good-bye to them at night, that they would ever see them again The letters that were sent off towards the end of the month to catch the homeward mail, were full of dark forebodings* Outwardly the sepoys remained comparatively quiet, but they were secretly plotting among themselves, and intriguing through the medium of their leaders with the Nana Nothing but the procrastination of the infantry, who were less eager, or at any rate less impetuous than the cavalry, delayed the crisis so long † At last, on the evening of the 4th of June, it came

The cavalry rose first, and galloped to Newabgunj The 1st Infantry soon hurried after them Then the two regiments, making common cause with the Nana's retainers, burst open the gaol, destroyed the public offices, rifled the treasury, and made themselves masters of the contents of the magazine In the midst of their revels, however, they wondered why they had not been joined by the other two infantry regiments The sequel proved that the latter could have had no fixed purpose of rising, if they were not actually loyal in intention All through the night they remained quiet At two o'clock in the morning they went on parade When the parade was over, they were dismissed to their lines, and proceeded to cook their breakfasts Soon afterwards messengers from the mutineers rode up and urged them to come and take their part in the division of the plunder The 56th yielded to the temptation The bulk of the 53rd were still standing their ground when, with unhappy want of judgment, Wheeler ordered Ashe to open fire upon them Then all broke and fled, except some eighty men, who remained persistently faithful to their salt ‡

The mutiny

June 5

Meanwhile, the mutineers had sent a deputation of their

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* Mowbray-Thomson, pp 33-7, Letter of May 28 to the *Times*, Oct 22, 1857, p 7, col 1

† "The 53rd and 56th N I showed great lukewarmness until the mutiny actually broke out The 1st N I and 2nd Cavalry were the instigators" *Depositions taken at Cawnpore under the direction of Lieut.-Col G W Williams*, p 75

‡ *Depositions*, pp 30, 32, Trevelyan, pp 95-8, Mowbray Thomson, pp 39-41 Besides the 80 men, the native officers of the 53rd remained faithful, having been already called into the entrenchment

officers to sound the intentions of the Nana. Introduced into his presence, the spokesman addressed him in these words, "Maharajah, a kingdom awaits you if you join our enterprise, but death if you side with our enemies" "What have I to do with the British?" replied the Nana, "I am altogether yours" The officers went on to ask him whether he would lead them to Delhi He assented, and then, laying his hands upon the head of each, swore that he would observe his promise The delegates returned to their comrades; and next morning the four regiments marched as far as Kullianpore, on the road to Delhi But the idea of going to Delhi was by no means pleasing to the advisers of the Nana. Chief among them was a crafty young Mahometan, named Azimoollah, who had gone to London, as his agent, to lay his petition before the Court of Directors, and had consoled him for its rejection with the tale that England had fallen from her high place among the nations of Europe This man exerted all his eloquence to dissuade his master from yielding to the wishes of the sepoys The Nana was easily convinced Why should he, a Brahmin, place himself under the orders of a Mahometan king? Why should he commit political suicide by going to a place where he would be lost among a crowd of greater men? Why should he not return to Cawnpore with his new allies, overpower that handful of Englishmen collected in their miserable entrenchment, and establish, by the right of conquest, the claim so unjustly denied by their detested Government? There was no time to be lost Riding with all speed to Kullianpore, he urged the sepoys to give up the idea of marching on Delhi, and held out to them high hopes of the glory and the plunder which they might acquire by going back with him to attack the English The sepoys listened, and were persuaded At sunrise on the 6th the whole brigade was marching down the Delhi road towards Cawnpore Early in the morning Wheeler received a letter from the Nana, warning him to expect an attack The news was indeed a cruel disappointment to all his people They had been spared the horrors which accompanied mutiny at so many other stations, they had been allowed to hope that they would soon be relieved, and be free, some perhaps to do good service against the enemies of their country, others to rejoin their friends, to wait in some secure abode for the restoration of peace, or to return to their own land. And now their hopes were shattered Not all, however There, within those

June 5

miserable defences, they could still bear themselves in a manner worthy of their motherland (Sadly then, but resolutely they waited for the threatened attack) For a time there was no sign of its coming, for the rebels were busy gorging themselves with the plunder of the city, insulting respectable natives, and murdering the stray Europeans who had not put themselves under Wheeler's protection But towards ten o'clock flames were seen rising here and there above the nearest quarter of the city· presently the crack of musketry was heard, and now again more plainly armed men were descried hurrying confusedly over the canal bridge nearer and nearer they came, and now they were pouring into the lines a puff of smoke arose, a round shot came crashing into the entrenchment, the garrison were swift to answer the challenge, the bugle sounded, the defenders fell in at their appointed posts, and the cries of terrified women and startled children, mingling with the roar of the contending artillery, proclaimed that the siege of Cawnpore had begun *

The siege.

It was indeed a tragic moment in the world's history, for never, since wars began, had a besieged garrison been called upon to do or to suffer greater things than were appointed for the garrison of Cawnpore The besieging army numbered some three thousand trained soldiers, well fed, well lodged, well armed, and supplied with all munitions of war, aided by the retainers of their newly-elected chief, and supported by the sympathies of a large portion of the civil population The besieged were few in number, and had to contend against almost every disadvantage that could conceivably have been arrayed against them Besides a few civilians and a small band of faithful sepoys, they could only muster about four hundred English fighting men, more than seventy of whom were invalids † Wholly insufficient in itself,

* Mowbray-Thomson, p 65, *Depositions*, pp 34, 40, 76, Trevelyan, pp. 103-7, 114, 120, 123-4, Nanukchund, p vii., Shepherd, pp 20-1

† Shepherd gives the following statement of the numbers

European soldiers	210
Native musicians (belonging to native regiments)	44
Officers, about	100
Non-military, about	100
Loyal native officers and sepoys, about	20
Servants, about	50
Women and children, about	376
Total, about	900

Trevelyan (p 118) estimates the total at 1,000. Most of the faithful sepoys

this small force was encumbered by the charge of a helpless throng of women and children Combatants and non-combatants alike experienced now for the first time the unmitigated fierceness of a tropical summer Men who, with every appliance at hand for counteracting the depressing effects of the climate, had been wont to regard a morning parade at that season of the year as a hardship, had now to fight all day beneath the scorching rays of an Indian summer sun Women who had felt it an intolerable grievance to have to pass the long summer days in luxurious rooms artificially cooled, with delicious iced drinks to slake their thirst, and exciting novels to distract their thoughts, were now huddled together, without the most ordinary comforts, in two stifling barracks, which offered the only shelter to be found within the precincts of the entrenchment. In comparison with the entrenchment itself, the defences of Londonderry, which appeared so contemptible to Lewis's lieutenants, might have been called formidable It was in fact merely a weak mud wall, about four feet in height, and constructed of earth so dry and friable as to be unable to resist the shock even of a bullet. Perhaps even the heroes of the Cawnpore garrison might have despaired of defending so frail a barrier against the overwhelming numbers of their enemy, if they had had to trust to it alone There was, however, one element of strength in their position Close to the southern corner of the entrenchment lay a row of barracks, two of which they had contrived to occupy One of these, known as No 2 barrack, they regarded as the key of their position * Yet even this advantage was not wholly their own, for the enemy took care to avail themselves of the cover which the unoccupied buildings offered Such were the desperate odds against which the doomed garrison now steeled their hearts to contend †

From the moment when the crash of that first shot gave the signal, the struggle was maintained, almost without a pause, by day and night ‡ Day and night the enemy hurled a continuous shower of shot, and shell, and bullets into the entrenchment

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were ordered to occupy a hospital, about six hundred yards east of the entrenchment. They defended it until June 9 or 10, when it was set on fire

* Mowbray-Thomson, pp 69, 70

† Nanukchund, pp ix. xii xiv xv–xviii , Trevelyan, pp 117–20, 135, 143–6

‡ *Depositions*, p 34, Diary of an Opium Gomashta at Cawnpore (*Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, Aug 1857, pp 643–54), Shepherd, p 25

day and night the defenders, with ever lessened numbers, sent back a feebler discharge Soldiers, civilians, and loyal sepoys stood side by side, and, while the artillerymen replied, as best they could, to the crushing fire of the Nana's heavy batteries, the infantry, each man with a pile of loaded muskets before him, astonished the rebels by the swiftness and accuracy of their fire Meanwhile the barracks, compassed about by a swarm of enemies, were defended with desperate tenacity by a handful of men, who had as stern a battle to maintain and as heavy a load of weariness to endure as their comrades in the trenches, though, more fortunate than those, they were spared the agony of beholding the sufferings of their women and children Day and night all fought on alike, for there was no rest for any but those to whom the sleep of death was vouchsafed, or, if a man sank down exhausted under the heel of his gun or the shelter of the wall, he was soon roused by the noise of musketry, and awoke from dreams of home or of coming relief to a life-in-death within the entrenchment of Cawnpore The number of those who thus awoke grew smaller day after day Within the first week fifty-nine artillerymen, all that the garrison could muster, were killed or wounded at their posts Women as well as men fell victims to the enemy's fire A private was walking with his wife, when a single bullet killed him, broke both her arms, and wounded an infant whom she was carrying An officer was talking with a comrade at the main-guard, when a musket-ball struck him, and, as he was limping painfully towards the barracks to have his wound dressed, Lieutenant Mowbray-Thomson of the 56th, who was supporting him, was struck also, and both fell helplessly to the ground Presently, as Thomson lay woefully sick of his wound, another officer came up to condole with him, and he too received a wound from which he died before the end of the siege. Young Godfrey Wheeler, a son of the General, was lying wounded in one of the barracks, when a round shot crashed through the walls of the room, and carried off his head in the sight of his mother and sisters Little children, straggling outside the wall, were deliberately shot down * The record of these horrors is only a page torn from a volume of tragedy Yet not a murmur was heard The acutest sufferings were patiently, and by some even cheerfully endured.

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* *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 596, Mowbray-Thomson, pp 69-71, 84-5

The siege had barely lasted a week when an event occurred which the garrison had long regarded as inevitable, and which warned them to prepare for sufferings far heavier than any they had yet endured A red-hot shot struck the thatched roof of one of the barracks, within which the women and children, the sick and wounded were lying, and in a few minutes the entire building was enveloped in flames Then ensued the most awful, yet, for some who took part in it, the most glorious scene of this dreadful siege,—the fire illuminating the darkness of the night, the helpless sufferers within the burning building mingling their shrieks for help with the ceaseless boom of the artillery and the continuous swift roar of the flames, the soldiers running from their posts, and, though girt about by two deadly perils, on the one side the infernal fire from the enemy's batteries and musketry, on the other the downward crash of glowing masses of masonry and burning rafters, yet striving to extinguish the flames, and rescuing their friends from an agonising death, while, outside the entrenchment, the unrelenting rebels, taking full advantage of the distraction of the garrison, worked their guns with feverish energy, as though they hoped, with the aid of the conflagration, at one stroke to complete the ruin of their victims When the flames had subsided, the men of the 32nd, regardless of the fire which their enemies continued to direct against them, began diligently to rake the ashes in search of their lost medals * It was a bright example of the romantic sensibility of the British soldier

June 11

During the earlier days of the siege the enemy, conscious of their moral inferiority to the men whom they had driven to bay, and relying on the strength of their artillery, contented themselves mainly with the safe process of bombardment but on the 12th of June, thinking perhaps that they had by this time broken the spirit of their opponents, they mustered courage to attempt a general assault on the British position They could see their handful of victims within, they had but to make one resolute charge, and in a few minutes they might have borne down every man by the crushing weight of their numbers At first they moved confidently forward, but they could not nerve themselves to face the stern resistance which they encountered, and soon the survivors, terrified by the sight

* Mowbray-Thomson, pp 92–5

of their falling comrades, turned and fled * They knew that they had failed, and confessed their failure by returning to their old tactics.

The most trying period of the siege had now begun. There was so little food left that the daily ration of each person had to be reduced to a handful of flour and a handful of split peas If the enemy were afraid to assault, their firing was as incessant as ever Round shot plumped and bounded over the open ground, hurled down masses of timber from the remaining barrack, and sent bricks flying in all directions, bullets pattered like hail against the walls, and broke the windows to atoms The garrison were far less able to reply than they had been at the beginning, for one of their guns had lost its muzzle, two had had their sides battered in, and a fourth had been knocked off its carriage While fresh hosts of rebels and mutineers were daily swarming up to swell the ranks of their enemies, their own numbers were greatly diminished Some were struck down by the sun, or wasted by fever, others pined away from exposure, from hunger, or from thirst, others went mad under the burden of their sufferings More wretched still was the fate of the wounded, for the fire had destroyed the surgical instruments and the medical stores, and death, which came too slowly, was their only healer. But most to be pitied of all were those women who still survived The destruction of the barrack had robbed them even of the wretched shelter which they had had before, and now their only resting-place was the hard earth, their only protection the crumbling mud wall beneath which they lay They were begrimed with dirt their dresses were in rags, their cheeks were pinched and haggard, and their brows ploughed with furrows There were some even who, while stunned by horrid sounds, and sickened by foul or ghastly sights, had to suffer the pains of labour, and gave birth to infants for whose future they could not dare to hope. A skilful pen might describe the acuteness of their bodily sufferings but who can imagine the intensity of their mental tortures? They lacked the grim consolation of fighting an unyielding battle against desperate odds, which may even then have sustained the heart of the soldier Yet they never despaired They gave the artillerymen their stockings for grape-cases, they handed round ammunition to the infantry,

* Trevelyan, p 150, Nanukchund, p xii.

and they cheered all alike by their uncomplaining spirit and their tender, gracious kindness The return which the men made for their devotion was the most acceptable service that they could have performed They saw little children around them dying of thirst, and they resolved to relieve them. There was only one well within the entrenchment, and, to reach it, they had to pass over the most exposed part of the position But they could not bear to hear the children's piteous cries, and, at the cost of many heroic lives, the labour of love was performed *

About the middle of the siege the grim irony of fortune sent a solitary stranger to reinforce the enfeebled garrison The men were standing, as usual, at their posts, when they were amazed to see an English officer galloping towards the entrenchment, and presently leaping over the barrier which had defied every attack of the enemy It was a young lieutenant of the 7th Cavalry, named Bolton, who had been sent out on district duty from Lucknow, and who, turned adrift by the mutiny of his men, was fain to share even the desperate fortunes of the garrison of Cawnpore † His was the only aid that Wheeler ever received He had urgently written to Lawrence for help, and sometimes the men, hearing a sound of distant cannonading, brightened up for a moment in the hope that relief was coming, but presently the old look of care would steal back again over their faces ‡ At last a letter came, which Lawrence had written with a breaking heart, saying that it was impossible for him to spare a detachment from the weak force which was all he had for the protection of his own people The garrison received the news with manly resignation Captain Moore of the 32nd, a man to whom common consent has assigned the first place among the defenders of Cawnpore, wrote, in the name of his chief and of his comrades, that, since no help could be afforded them, it was the fixed resolution of all to hold the position to the last § From the beginning he had cheered on the men by his hopeful face and gallant example, and consoled the women by his courteous, tender sympathy,

June 16

June 18

* Mowbray-Thomson, pp 78–84, 99, 100, 104, 113–4, 136–7, Trevelyan, p 176, Shepherd, pp 45, 52–3

† Mowbray-Thomson, p 120

‡ *Ib*, p 114

§ *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 598, Gubbins, p 448

he had illuminated even the glorious record of the 32nd by his surpassing valour, and now, when hope had all but vanished, he was still, though enfeebled by a wound, the life and soul of the defence Under him fought the survivors of a band of officers, each one of whom was a hero, besides those private soldiers who, though their names find no mention here, are not forgotten by the army, or by the people of England. Not less brave than they, though by profession a man of peace, was Moncrieff, the chaplain, whom all loved for his constancy and self-denial, and who, going from post to post, spoke words of hope and consolation, which were all the more solemn and impressive because none of those who heard them could tell whether he would be spared to listen to another service. No wonder that the hosts of the enemy could not prevail against men like these No wonder that when, on the 23rd of June, they came on, fortified by solemn oaths, and stimulated by malignant hatred, to attempt another assault, they were hurled back, as before, in ignominious rout But the end was not far off Two more attempts were made to obtain relief On the 24th a Eurasian soldier left the entrenchment in disguise, hoping to procure reinforcements from Allahabad, but returned unsuccessful On the same day a commissariat official named Shepherd, went out, disguised as a native cook, but was soon taken prisoner Next day a woman came into the entrenchment, with a letter from the Nana, offering a safe passage to Allahabad to every member of the garrison who had not been "connected with the acts of Lord Dalhousie" The offer was vehemently resisted by the younger officers, who could not bear the thought of surrendering the position which had been so nobly defended, and even Wheeler, suspicious of the Nana's sincerity, was inclined to return a refusal, until Moore, whose jealousy for the honour of his country and of his profession could not be questioned, pointed out that, as succour could not possibly arrive in time, an honourable capitulation held out the only chance of saving the lives of the women and children An armistice was accordingly arranged An hour after dusk the Nana gathered together in his tent five or six of his advisers, and arranged with them a plan the execution of which will be presently described.

June 25

June 26. The capitulation.

Next morning the representatives of the besieged and of the besiegers met to discuss terms of surrender. It was proposed that the garrison should

give up their position, their guns, and their treasure, and that in return they should be allowed to march out with their arms and a certain proportion of ammunition, and be provided with boats and provisions for the voyage to Allahabad One hitch occurred The Nana required that the position should be evacuated that night Wheeler replied that he could not possibly march out until the following morning Then the Nana threatened to renew the bombardment, and boasted that in a few days he would put everyone of the garrison to death He was told in reply that he might fulfil his threats if he could, but that there was enough powder still left in the magazine to blow him and the two armies together into the air The bare suggestion was enough to bring him to his senses The treaty was forthwith signed the guns were delivered over to the enemy, and the garrison lay down for their last sleep within the entrenchment of Cawnpore *

June 27

Early in the morning they marched out, and looked for the last time on that battered and crumbling wall of clay, which they had defended for nearly three weeks against the assaults of an enemy ten times as numerous as themselves. Some of them may have felt a vague foreboding of coming danger, for it was whispered that one of the delegates, who had gone to see whether the boats were ready, had overheard the sepoys pronounce the ominous word "massacre" But even the most anxious must have ventured to look forward to a time when, sitting over the fireside in their English homes, they would tell to awe-struck listeners the story of the great siege Even now some were found to sympathise with them in what they had done and suffered As the wan and ragged column filed along the road, the women and children in bullock-carriages or on elephants, the wounded in palanquins, the fighting men on foot, sepoys came clustering up round the officers whom they had betrayed, and talked, in wonder and admiration, of the surpassing heroism of the defence About three-quarters of a mile from the entrenchment a ravine, spanned by a wooden bridge with white rails, ran, at right angles to the road, towards the river Arriving at the bridge, the procession turned aside, and began to thread its way down the ravine. And now the banks of the Ganges were

* Trevelyan, pp 220-4, Mowbray-Thomson, pp 105-6, 126-8, 130-2, 141-2, 148-56

close at hand. The unwieldy boats, with their thatched roofs, were seen drawn up close to the water's edge, and a great crowd of natives of every class was waiting to look on at the embarkation. There were some too who had not come merely to look on. More than a thousand infantry sepoys and several squadrons of cavalry were posted behind cover on the banks, and Tantia Topee, a favoured counsellor of the Nana, who was destined to play a conspicuous part in the rebellion, was there to execute his master's orders for the management of the embarkation

What those orders were, presently appeared Those troops had not come to serve as a guard of honour They had come to be the instruments for executing that plan which the Nana had devised No mud wall separated them now from the men and the women who had defied them Their numbers and their artillery must surely be irresistible now Now, therefore, was the moment to take the time-honoured vengeance of a besieging army upon an obstinate garrison.

The massacre on the Ganges.

Hardly had the embarkation begun, when a bugle sounded. Immediately afterwards a host of sepoys, leaping up from behind the bushes and the houses on either bank, lifted their muskets to their shoulders, and a hail of bullets fell upon the dense crowd of passengers, as they were clambering on board Cannon roared out, and grape-shot raked the boats from stem to stern Almost at the same instant the thatched roofs, which had been purposely strewed beforehand with glowing cinders, burst into flame Then the sick and the wounded, who had survived the destruction of the barrack and the horrors of the siege, were suffocated or burned to death The able-bodied men sprang overboard, and strove with might and main to push off the boats into deep water but all save one stuck fast Ashe, and Bolton, and Moore were shot down as they stood in the water. Women and children bent down under the sides of the boats, trying to escape the bullets Some ten or twelve men swam for dear life after the floating boat but one soon sank exhausted others, struck by grape or bullets, gasped, and beat the bloody surf, and turned over dead, and three only reached the boat Now the troopers rode with drawn sabres into the river, and slashed the cowering women to death Little infants were dragged from their mothers' arms, and torn to pieces. Suddenly, however, a messenger came from the Nana, saying that

no more women or children were to be put to death. The slaughter therefore ceased; and the trembling survivors, a hundred and twenty-five in number, their clothes drenched, and torn, and mud-stained, and dripping with blood, were dragged back to Cawnpore.*

Pursuit of the fugitives

Meanwhile the army of murderers at the river-side had still work to do, for it was the Nana's will that every Christian man should be destroyed The boat that had been floated into mid-stream alone escaped. Yet even its occupants soon found that their sufferings had only begun They had no oars, no rudder, and no food. The water of the Ganges was all that passed their lips save prayers, and shrieks, and groans † Their numbers were rapidly diminished, for their enemies crowded along the banks and fired upon them whenever an opportunity arose, and, though soon after noon they drifted beyond the reach of the guns, the sepoys still kept up with them, and harassed them by repeated volleys of musketry It seemed to their jaded imaginations that that dreadful day would never come to an end Late in the afternoon the boat stuck fast on a sand-bank, and, before they succeeded in forcing it off, darkness had come on As the night dragged slowly by, they stranded again and again, and every time the men had to get out of the boat, and push it off into the stream Day broke, and, seeing no sepoys, they began to hope that they were to be left unmolested. But

June 28

about two o'clock the boat again got aground, and the rebels presently appearing, opened fire and killed or wounded five more All the afternoon rain fell in torrents At sunset a boat was seen bearing down in pursuit with fifty or sixty armed men on board. But the pursuers did not yet know the full measure of their opponents' courage Without waiting to be attacked, some twenty of our men leaped out of their boat, fell upon the enemy, whose boat had

* Mowbray-Thomson, pp 156-7, 166-70, Trevelyan, pp 227, 229-30, 243, 245-53, *Depositions*, p 21 Speaking of the preparations for the massacre, Nanukchund observes "The troopers of the Rissala remonstrated with the Nana, and observed that it was more honourable to fight the Europeans openly . The Nana assured them that according to his creed it was quite allowable to take false oaths at such junctures, and that when the object was to annihilate an enemy, he would not hesitate to take an oath on the waters of the Ganges, or adopt any one of a hundred other artifices," pp xix xx.

† These are the very words of Mowbray-Thomson, p 172

also run aground, and put nearly every man of them to the sword Utterly worn out, the fugitives fell asleep A hurricane arose in the night, and once more the boat floated but, when day broke, those who were still alive thought that the end was come at last, for they had drifted into a side-current of the main stream, and they saw a body of sepoys, supported by a multitude of villagers, standing on the bank, ready to overwhelm them But there were still eleven British soldiers and a sergeant in the boat, who, though tired almost to death, and nearly starved, were as keen as ever to be led against the enemy there were still two officers to cheer them on, Mowbray-Thomson of the 56th, and Delafosse of the 53rd, who had covered themselves with glory in the siege, there was still a commander, Major Vibart of the 2nd Cavalry, to send them forth, though he was too sorely wounded to lead them to victory Leaping ashore, these men charged right through the dense masses of the enemy, and, before the awe and astonishment which their courage had inspired could subside, fought their way back to the place where they had landed But the boat had drifted far away. They ran down the bank to overtake it, but they never saw it again The enemy were fast closing in upon them, and, weary and panting as they were, they had to run bare-footed on and on over the rugged bank, and under the burning sun At last they saw a Hindoo temple a little distance ahead To this stronghold they rushed, and prepared to make their last stand The sergeant was shot as he was entering Four of the privates crouched down, by Mowbray-Thomson's command, in the doorway; and on their bayonets the foremost of the enemy, hurrying up in the blind eagerness of pursuit, perished miserably Those behind, unable to force their way in, tried to set the temple on fire, and, when the wind blew the flames away, threw bags of powder upon the glowing ashes Then the thirteen rushed over the blazing wood, jumped down, and, firing a last volley, hurled themselves with fixed bayonets into the tumultuous crowd which surrounded them Six fell, but the rest, gaining the bank, threw their muskets into the water, plunged in themselves, and swam for their lives The swarm of blacks ran yelling down the bank, and fired volley after volley at the bobbing heads. Two of the seven were soon struck, and sank. A third, too tired to battle for his life, made for the shore and was beaten to death as soon as he landed The remaining

June 29

four, Mowbray-Thomson, Delafosse, and privates Murphy and Sullivan, after swimming without a moment's pause for six miles, found rest at last within the house of a friendly rajah of Oude * These men had passed triumphantly through an ordeal as terrible as any that ever tested human courage and endurance, yet to none of them was awarded that prize of valour which is the dearest object of the British soldier's ambition But many who have worn the Victoria Cross upon their breasts might have envied the surviving defenders of Cawnpore the honourable scars which were their ineffaceable decoration

The whole of the story of Cawnpore has not yet been told After drifting beyond the reach of Mowbray-Thomson and his companions, the boat was overtaken by the enemy, and its defenceless crew of eighty souls, wounded men, and women, and children, were brought back to the city There, by the orders of the Nana, the men were put to death, and the women and children were confined in a building called the Savada House, along with the hundred and twenty-five whom, three days before, he had rescued, for his own purposes, from the hands of the destroyer

June 30

Then the conqueror prepared to reap the fruits of his victory. Returning to his palace at Bithoor, he caused himself to be proclaimed Peishwa with all the rites and ceremonies of an hereditary ruler But the noise of the salute which was fired in honour of his accession had scarcely died away before the troubles of a usurper began to crowd upon him The tradesmen, groaning under the rapacity and insolent cruelty of the mutineers, execrated him as the author of their sufferings It was rumoured that a Mahometan rival was to be set up against him, and the sepoys were angrily complaining of the niggardliness with which he had rewarded their services Their leaders swore that, if he did not soon show himself in their midst, they would go and fetch him, and on the 5th of July they actually put their threat into execution After a week of luxurious seclusion, he re-entered the city. There he found a deep gloom prevailing many of the inhabitants had abandoned their homes, and fled, for it was rumoured that an avenging army was advancing, by forced marches, from the

The Nana proclaimed Peishwa

June 30

July 1

* Mowbray Thomson, pp 170–86.

south-east, and hanging every native who crossed its path It was clearly necessary that he should do something to show that he was indeed the successor of Bajee Rao He therefore called upon his lieutenants to go out and attack the approaching force, and tried to restore the confidence of his subjects by proclaiming that everywhere the infidels had been overwhelmed, and had been sent to hell *

Meanwhile, the number of his own victims had been increased The unhappy fugitives from Futtehgurh,† unconscious of the worse fate that was in store for them, had come to seek an asylum in Cawnpore Those who had left Futtehgurh in June, had been butchered by order of the Nana immediately after their arrival Of those who followed, all the men but three were murdered in his presence The asylum that he appointed for the survivors was a small house called the Beebeegurh, to which he had lately transferred the captives of the Savada In this new prison, which had belonged to a poor Eurasian clerk, five men and two hundred and six women and children were confined. Save that they were no longer exposed to the fire of the enemy, these poor captives were worse off now than they had been in the entrenchment of Cawnpore, or the fort of Futtehgurh English ladies, the wives of the defenders and the rulers of British India, were forced, like slaves, to grind corn for the murderer of their husbands They themselves were fed on a scanty allowance of the coarsest food Those were happiest among them who perished from the diseases which this food engendered All this time the Nana himself, in a sumptuous building, which overlooked their prison, was living in a round of feasts, and revels, and debaucheries But on the 15th of July, in the midst of his unholy mirth, an alarming announcement came upon him. That avenging army of whose coming he had heard was within a day's march of the city, and the force which he had sent out to check its advance had suffered a crushing defeat ‡

June 12

July 9

The Beebeegurh

* Trevelyan, pp 306–8, 311–13, Nanukchund, pp xxii xxiii, *Depositions*, p 88 The proclamations are to be found in the *Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, and in Kaye, vol ii, App pp. 670–6

† See pp 142, 145, *supra*

‡ Trevelyan, pp 280–92, *Depositions*, p 57.

Then ensued the last act of the tragedy of Cawnpore. It was pointed out to the Nana that, if he were again defeated, the captives in the Beebeegurh would supply the English General with damning evidence against all who had taken part in the massacres that, on the other hand, if they were put out of the way, the General would feel that there was nothing to be gained by continuing his march The Nana eagerly accepted the hint First of all, the five men who had been suffered to live thus far were brought out, and killed in his presence Then a number of sepoys were selected, and told to go and shoot the women and children through the windows of the house They went, but they could not harden their hearts to obey the rest of their instructions They belonged to that regiment which had murdered the boy ensigns at Allahabad, but they were not prepared to murder women and children. They contented themselves therefore with firing at the ceiling instead But such effeminate sensibility was disgusting to the Nana At his bidding, then, two Mahometan butchers, an Afghan, and two Hindoos, armed with long knives, went into the house, and hacked their victims to pieces All through the night the bodies lay neglected in the room, and moans were distinctly heard proceeding from it by those without. Next morning a heap of corpses, a heap of wounded, and a number of children who had escaped the knives of the assassins were dragged out, and thrown, the living and the dead together, into a well hard by *

Last act of the tragedy of Cawnpore

July 15

July 16

The fiery trial was over at last It is hard for even the most sympathetic imagination actually to realise, not merely to believe the fact that English men, and women, and children, did indeed pass through that trial not five-and-twenty years ago † But all was now past Forgetting the agonising siege, the horrid carnage at the river-side, the bitter imprisonment, the pitiless massacre, they slept in the well of Cawnpore as calmly as we shall sleep, if such be our lot, beneath the green English turf Only for their destroyer all was not over He had had his revenge, and won his triumph He had ordered

* *Depositions*, pp 8, 58, 107–14, Nanukchund, p xxv
† Written in 1881

salutes to be fired in honour of his glorious victory He had caused himself to be proclaimed Peishwa But the voice of the blood which he had shed was crying out, not in vain, to God for vengeance The murderer who had shut his ears to the piteous cries of tender women and innocent children, was soon to hear, on the open battle-field, the appalling shout of the British soldier, and the roar of Havelock's guns

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CHAPTER IX.

LUCKNOW AND THE OUDE DISTRICTS.—HAVELOCK'S CAMPAIGN.

1857

Anxiety of Canning for Oude

It will be remembered that, just before the announcement of the rising at Meerut reached him, Canning was anxiously considering the significance of a mutiny which had lately occurred at Lucknow. It was natural then that, after he had received that announcement, he should feel seriously alarmed for the safety of the province of which Lucknow was the capital. In common, however, with every Englishman in India, he drew comfort from the reflection that its Chief Commissioner was Henry Lawrence.

Henry Lawrence

Henry Lawrence began his Indian career as a lieutenant in the Bengal Artillery; but, like many other ambitious subalterns, he soon found his way into the wider arena of civil employment. The happiest years of his life were spent in the comradeship of a wife whose character must be known and honoured by all who would know and honour his With her to share his sympathies and his aspirations, he laboured on year after year in different districts and at different occupations, but always with a single-minded desire to promote the welfare of the people among whom his lot was cast, and to do his part towards realising his high ideal of the duties of the imperial race In these labours, as well as in the formation of his opinions regarding the problems of Anglo-Indian life, he allowed himself to be guided by sentiment as much as by reason, for his temperament was emotional, imaginative, and actively responsive to poetical influences But that which gave its special character to his

benevolent toil was the passionate religious enthusiasm which inspired it He was continually inflamed with a fervent desire to grow better every day His religion was the religion of a plain Christian man, knowing nothing of doctrinal subtleties, but solving his simple doubts by a living faith in God It was in the strength of this faith that he laboured to subdue his roughness of manner, his violent temper, his impatience of incompetent authority, his morbid sensitiveness to real or fancied slights, and trained and chastened almost to saintly perfection the many noble qualities with which his nature had been endowed But no mere enumeration of virtues would give a just idea of the strength and the beauty of his character To understand it aright, the reader must follow him through the toils, the triumphs, and the disappointments of his life He must picture him as a school-boy, ever ready to acknowledge his faults, ever ready to stand up for the weak, and to do battle, when called upon, with the strong He must follow him on his first campaign, and see him cheering on his gunners, and sharing their hardships He must accompany him on his surveying expeditions through the jungles, and note the thoroughness with which he does his work He must watch him striving to bring the blessings of civilisation into the Punjaub, and labouring, not in vain, to inspire that little knot of disciples who owed everything to him with his lofty conceptions of duty He must listen to him pleading the cause of the fallen Sirdars with his colleagues at Lahore He must read his loving letters to his wife and children, and not shut his eyes to his cold and querulous letters to Dalhousie He must think of him as he knelt with his wife at his bedside, pouring out his whole soul in prayer to God on behalf of the brother who had been preferred to him, and the people whose destinies had been removed from his control * He must think of him when, a few years later, he had lost the helpmeet of his life, and was nerving himself again by prayer to endure to the end of his pilgrimage. From that moment, though he could not wholly banish the bitterness of disappointed ambition, though he could never hope to banish the sense of desolation, the most glorious epoch of his life began He was dead to the world now, though he never ceased to work for it Thus, when we

* Letter from Herbert Edwardes to John Nicholson, printed in *Lives of Indian Officers*, vol. ii p 472

behold him in the last scene of his life, we feel that a Christian hero indeed stands before us He was only fifty years old when he came to Lucknow but he looked an old man, for his face bore the traces of many years of toil beneath an Indian sun and the still deeper marks of a never-ending conflict with self His eyes, overhung by massive, craggy brows, looked out with an expression in which melancholy was strangely blended with humour his thin, wasted cheeks were scored down their whole length by deep lines, and a long, ragged beard added to his look of age Yet the raw Addiscombe cadet was easily recognisable in the matured soldier-statesman The characteristics that the friends of his manhood so lovingly noted had been strongly marked even in his boyhood, nor had he ever lost those peculiarities of temper which had been so familiar to his schoolfellows Day by day, however, his character was becoming more and more ripe He was still the fearless champion of the oppressed, the stern reprover of evil-doers; but he was more gentle and more forgiving than he had once been His humility was such that he would have said of himself in the words of the *Imitation*, "Oh, that I had spent but one day in this world thoroughly well" · but few have gone nearer to the fulfilment of that fundamental precept of Thomas à Kempis, "That leaving all a man forsake himself, and go wholly from himself, and retain nothing of self-love."

How he dealt with the population and the sepoys

It was indeed the deep sympathy of Henry Lawrence's nature, his immense love for his fellow men that fitted him so peculiarly for the work he was now doing Others might have been better qualified than he for the stern duty of grappling with fully developed rebellion; but it is probable that no other Englishman in India could have succeeded so thoroughly in the preliminary task of healing the great mass of discontent that prevailed in Oude before the outbreak of rebellion, and thus laying a solid foundation, so to speak, upon which to erect a fortress capable of resisting the inevitable shock He had done this not merely by devising conciliatory measures, but also by impressing the chief sufferers with the belief that he personally felt for their sufferings "I have struck up a friendship," he wrote to Canning, "with two of the best and wealthiest of the chiefs, and am on good terms with all."*

* *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 571

These words give a better idea of the secret of his success than the most detailed account of the acts of his government could give. The sepoys, on the other hand, were, he feared, too deeply infected with the taint of disloyalty to be reached by any cure For him personally indeed they felt the deepest respect * They believed that he had their welfare at heart But they did not believe the same of the Government which he served A Brahmin jemadar of the Oude artillery, who had been recommended to him as a man of remarkable intelligence and good character, told him that he was convinced that for ten years past the Government had been plotting the fraudulent conversion of all the natives. Lawrence tried to reason with him, but in vain The man obstinately maintained his own opinion, and supported it with the words, "I tell you what everybody says"† Still Lawrence was hopeful enough to believe that it might be possible to do something to eradicate even a widespread and deep-rooted delusion like this Accordingly he summoned the native officers and about fifty privates from each native regiment to meet him at a great Durbar to be held in his private garden The Durbar was fixed for the 12th of May The sepoys arrived at the appointed hour. The officers seated themselves upon the chairs which had been provided for them, while the men clustered about in groups behind At sunset the Chief Commissioner himself appeared, attended by the principal military and civil officers and some of the influential natives of Lucknow He looked indeed like one who would speak straight home to the hearts of his hearers, for upon his face were stamped the unmistakeable signs of a chastened enthusiasm, a holy sincerity, and an all-embracing charity. Then, while every eye was bent upon him, and every ear was strained to hear him, he stood up to address a last appeal to the good sense and the loyalty of the representatives of the native army He asked them to contrast the tyranny and the persecution of the Mogul Emperors at Delhi and of the Hindoo rulers at Lahore with the beneficence and the tolerance of the British Government He urged them not to listen to the lying tales of interested agitators He reminded them of the proved ability of his countrymen to punish those who resisted their just authority. Finally, he besought them to remember

* *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 561, *Parl Papers*, vol. xxx (1857), p 849
† *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 573

that they were soldiers, decorated, like himself, for honourable service against the enemies of England, and adjured them to refrain from tarnishing the glorious record of the Bengal army.* Then, calling to his side certain natives who had lately given practical proofs of their fidelity, he presented them with dresses of honour and purses of money, and held them up as an example to their comrades. It seemed that his words would bear good fruit. Nothing could have been more becoming than the conduct of his hearers. Most of the officers zealously declared their attachment to the Government. But not long afterwards it was ascertained that they had attributed the whole proceeding to fear of themselves.†

The news from Meerut and Delhi arrives.

It was on the day after the holding of the Durbar that the fact of the outbreak at Meerut was telegraphed to Lawrence. On the 14th he received the further news of the seizure of Delhi.‡ Gubbins, however, was the first to discern how the calamity might affect the condition of Lucknow. He foresaw, what no one else had as yet thought of,§ that the Residency, the most important position in the city, would probably sooner or later be attacked. To enable the reader to understand the defensive measures which he suggested and the various military operations which followed, it will be necessary to give a short description of the city and its environs.

Lucknow.

In population, in extent, and in the number and character of its principal buildings Lucknow was one of the foremost cities of India. The town itself, a vast maze of long, narrow, filthy streets, above the mean, squalid houses of which rose here and there mansions surrounded by trees, lay to the south of the river Goomtee, and was separated from it by an irregular space crowded by a collection of splendid palaces and mosques, many of which were destined to become famous in the history of the Mutiny. Chief among these were the Fureed Buksh, the Chuttur Munzil, the Shah Nujeef, the Secunder Bagh, the Tara Kothee, the Emambarra,

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* *Life of Sir H. Lawrence*, p. 564; Gubbins, p. 14; Rees's *Siege of Lucknow*, pp. 8, 9.

† This statement is made solely on the authority of Gubbins (p. 15), but all who are familiar with Indian history will acknowledge that it is perfectly credible in itself.

‡ *Ib.*, pp. 15–6.

§ *Ib.*, p. 27. See, however, *Life of Sir H. Lawrence*, p. 560.

the Begum Kothee, and the Kaiser Bagh The Residency, an imposing three-storied building, with its roof surrounded by an Italian balustrade, stood on a hill sloping gently towards the river Near the Residency the river was spanned by an iron bridge, and a few hundred yards further up by one of stone The southern and eastern portions of the city were bounded by a canal, which entered the river, and was itself crossed by the road leading to Cawnpore. Beyond the right bank of this canal were scattered a number of posts, all of which were, in a military sense, important,—the Alumbagh, a large garden surrounded by a wall, on the Cawnpore road, about two miles from Lucknow, the Charbagh, an enclosure commanding the junction of the same road with the canal, the Dilkoosha, a palace standing in a park not far south of the point where the canal flowed into the river, and the Martinière college, quite close to that point. Such were the prominent features of Lucknow It was from the roof of the Residency that its surpassing beauty* was best discerned Standing there on a clear summer evening, one might have seen the distant chaos of the vast city gradually taking shape in narrow streets and twisting lanes, and nearer still in cupolas, columns, terraced roofs, gilded domes, and slender minarets, which, flooded in the yellow glow, rose in picturesque confusion above the rich foliage of the surrounding groves and gardens, while on the right stood the huge frowning pile of the Muchee Bhowun, and behind, the Goomtee, recalling some tranquil English stream, meandered through the fertile plain, and past the bright corn-fields, the mango-topes, and the scattered hamlets of the Garden of India †

Arrangement of the garrison

The existing arrangement of the garrison was strikingly defective The native regiments were stationed in various quarters within the city itself and on either side of the river, while the 32nd Foot, the only European regiment, was massed in a barrack just outside the city and about a mile and a half to the east of the Residency. Thus, if the sepoys chose to mutiny, they would have

* These words do not apply to the details of the Lucknow architecture, which are generally detestable. See some remarks of Mr Fergusson, quoted in the *Oude Gazetteer*, vol. ii pp 368

† Russell's *Diary in India*, vol. 1 , Forrest's *Picturesque Tour along the Rivers Ganges and Jumna*, Minturn's *New York to Delhi*, pp 169–189, Gubbins.

plenty of time to murder their officers before the British troops could come to the rescue Even the Residency, surrounded though it was by Government buildings, offices, and bungalows, was at the mercy of a native guard To remedy this obvious defect, Gubbins vehemently urged upon his chief the necessity of moving up a party of European troops for its protection But, though Lawrence had long felt that he must sooner or later make an improved disposition of the troops, he opposed the suggestions of Gubbins, on the ground that they might have the effect of precipitating a mutiny It was the same theory that deluded Sir Hugh Wheeler, the same theory that was put into practice so often and with such disastrous results in the summer of 1857 As, however, the chief military authorities agreed in supporting Gubbins's views, Lawrence gave way But even then he would have allowed two days to elapse before bringing up the European troops, if Gubbins had not roused him to instant action by pointing out that the sight of the preparations which were being made at the Residency for their reception might inflame the sepoys to rise if they were not instantly overawed The women, children, and invalids belonging to the 32nd were likewise brought up to the Residency The remaining portion of the 32nd was sent to keep watch over the native regiments at Mariaon, a cantonment situated on the north side of the river, about three miles from the Residency At the same time the Muchee Bhowun was occupied by a detachment of Europeans and picked sepoys *

May 15

May 16

May 17

It is probable that the conflict of opinion which had arisen between Lawrence and Gubbins suggested to the former the reflection that it would be impossible for him to carry out the measures which he might think most conducive to the interests of the State, so long as his authority was confined to civil matters Anyhow, on the 16th, he telegraphed to the Governor-General, "Give me plenary military power in Oude I will not use it unnecessarily" Soon afterwards he received the following reply —"You have full military powers The Governor-General will support you in everything that you think necessary" Armed with this authority, he

May 19

* *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 574, Gubbins, pp 5, 16–19

assumed command of the troops in Oude, with the rank of Brigadier-General.*

The Residency and the Muchee Bhowun.

Of the three military posts which had been brought under effective control he had already selected the Residency and the Muchee Bhowun as strongholds to be fortified in view of an attack It was, however, afterwards suggested to him that, if he were forced to sustain a siege, it might be better to abandon the Muchee Bhowun, and concentrate all the Europeans within the Residency † There was a good reason for the suggestion The Muchee Bhowun, though it had once been a place of great strength, had been suffered to fall into such decay that it was doubtful whether it could be made strong enough to resist a cannonade As, on the other hand, it was believed by the natives to be almost impregnable, a useful moral effect might obviously be produced by maintaining the show of preparing it for defence Moreover, Lawrence himself clung for a long time to the hope of being able actually to defend it ‡ He therefore caused supplies to be stored within it, took measures for strengthening its walls, and mounted upon its ramparts all the effective artillery that could be spared, as well as a vast collection of native cannon, which, if they were not likely to do

June 8.

Work begun on May 17

* *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 619, *Parl Papers*, vol xxx (1857), p 225

† Gubbins, p 145.

‡ *Ib*, Innes's *Rough Narrative of the Siege of Lucknow*, p 1, *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 576 See, however, an article in the *Calcutta Review* for January, 1859, p 200 The reviewer says, "It was distinctly intimated that, on the probability of an organised party threatening a siege, a concentration was to be effected on the Residency We know that it was the policy from the very commencement" See also *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 568 On the other hand, a lady wrote on May 31, "We were all told to be ready to take flight if necessary to the Muchee Bhowun in which we are to take refuge as our last resource"—*A Lady's Diary of the Siege of Lucknow*, p 32 In the official "Report of Defences of the Residency" it is stated that the defences of the Residency at first "received a secondary share of attention" *Overland Bombay Times*, 1858, p 248. Gubbins (p 145) positively asserts that, as late as June 8, Lawrence proposed to remove the Europeans and their families into the Muchee Bhowun, and his whole account is so circumstantial that, unless it is to be regarded as a deliberate invention, it must be accepted. Captain Wilson's statement is that, after the mutiny of May 30, Lawrence determined to use the Muchee Bhowun as an *entrepôt* only, and not as a fortress *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 590 The conclusion at which I have arrived is that, after long halting between two opinions, Lawrence finally decided, on or soon after June 8, to regard the Residency as the mainstay of defence

much harm to a besieging army, would at least create an impression of strength He also stored guns, ammunition, and supplies of every kind within the Residency, and, though with much compunction of heart, began to clear away the surrounding houses, which might have afforded cover to a besieging army When, however, his advisers urged him to destroy the adjoining mosques as well, he replied with characteristic tenderness for native feeling, "Spare the holy places"

Work begun on or before May 25

While these preparations were going on, there were many signs that the budmashes of Lucknow were ripe for sedition Papers, in which the Mahometans were called upon to rise and destroy the Feringhees, were constantly posted up in the town English ladies who were still bold enough to drive or walk through the streets were often greeted by defiant scowls Still, the worst symptoms that could be discerned indicated nothing like general disaffection Thanks to Lawrence's benevolent exertions, many of the influential native residents had become actively loyal the moneyed classes were naturally interested in the maintenance of order, and, with the exception of the irreconcileable religious malcontents and the sufferers whose grievances it had been impossible to redress, the bulk of the population were, if not positively well-disposed, at least not actively hostile The sepoys, however, were still restless and excitable The unmistakeable symptom of constantly recurring fires proved that they were bent on mischief, and Lawrence avowed that he would gladly rid himself of two of the regiments if he could * The news from other stations was not such as to cheer him On the night of the 23rd of May a telegram from Cawnpore announced that a mutiny was momentarily expected there As it was feared that the infection would communicate itself to Lucknow, the ladies were warned to take refuge at once within the Residency and the surrounding houses † Yet throughout the worst period of suspense the most desponding trusted in Lawrence's judgment, and leaned upon his strong

Behaviour of the people of Lucknow and the sepoys

Telegram from Cawnpore

* *Red Pamphlet*, p 76, Gubbins, pp 32, 40–1, *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, pp. 568–9, 574, Lady Inglis's *Journal*

† *Ib*, *A Lady's Diary of the Siege of Lucknow*, p 20, Gubbins, pp 31–2

and tender support. Worn as he was by bodily suffering, bowed down by the burden of his responsibilities, harassed by the criticisms of those who dissented from his policy, he forgot himself in his efforts to allay the anxieties and to encourage the hopes of all around him. Though clouds of melancholy often passed over him, there were moments even then when his manner and conversation were lighted up by the fascinating vivacity of an Irish gentleman He insisted upon his staff dining at his own table, he tried to promote gaiety and cheerful conversation among the other guests whom he from time to time gathered round him, he busied himself in providing for the personal comfort of those who had been obliged to leave their pleasant homes for the inhospitable protection of the Residency,* and he laboured night and day to hasten the completion of the preparations which he had devised for the security of all his people Towards the end of May, however, a daring plan was suggested to him, the adoption of which would probably have at once destroyed one of the most fruitful sources of his anxieties. The author of this plan was Martin Gubbins

Unselfish exertions of Lawrence

Gubbins was one of the most remarkable characters whose powers the opportunities of the Mutiny revealed. He was a man of immense personal courage, vehement force of will, and thorough kindness of heart † He was liable, indeed, to be carried away by a favourite theory, and his daring was apt to degenerate into rashness but, in energy and initiative, he was superior to Lawrence himself He saw into the true character of the crisis as clearly, and he would have met it as decisively as the able Commissioner who ruled at Patna, and, if he had had some share of his urbanity and tact, he too might have rendered important services to the State But he had neither urbanity nor tact To say that he had absolute confidence in his own opinions is simply to pronounce a judgment that would apply to some of the best and ablest men of whom history makes mention. His fault was that, when his opinions were most valuable, he urged them so recklessly and with such undis-

Martin Gubbins

* Gubbins, pp 81–2

† *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 554, note See also letters in the *Times* from Vincent Eyre and others July 28, 1858, p 9, col. 6, July 30, p 10 col. 3, Aug 3, p 10, col 3, Aug 6, p 11, col. 4

guised contempt for the judgment of those who differed from him, that he offended instead of convincing. He had too genuine an affection and respect for Lawrence to quarrel with him as he had quarrelled with Coverley Jackson * but the same faults of temper which had brought him into violent collision with the one, prevented him from acquiring that influence in the councils of the other which his genius should have secured for him Otherwise he might have been able to persuade him to adopt the plan which he now recommended.

He advises the disarming of the sepoys Lawrence rejects the advice

That plan was to disarm the native regiments at Lucknow Lawrence rejected it on the ground that, as he was Chief Commissioner not of Lucknow only but of the whole of Oude, he would not be justified in taking a step that would probably have the effect of driving the regiments at the out stations to revolt.† His argument was substantially the same as that which Canning urged in support of his own refusal to disarm the regiments at Dinapore, a refusal which has been shown to have produced the most disastrous results It is true, indeed, that Lawrence was weaker in European troops than Canning, and that he had to contend against heavier odds Nevertheless, he admitted that it was quite possible to disarm the regiments at Lucknow, and it is by no means certain that the consequences which he dreaded would have followed such a course Whenever the number of loyal troops was not so small as to be obviously powerless, the repressive force which they exerted was the stronger the more boldly their commander took the initiative against the malcontents ‡ While then it would be rash to affirm that Lawrence, with only one European regiment and a small force of European artillery at his disposal, could have absolutely dominated the sepoys at the out stations by disarming those at Lucknow, it may be safely assumed that the moral victory which he would have gained by disarming would have inspired the sepoys at the out stations with a wholesome respect for his power Moreover, the increased security which disarming would have given to Lucknow itself would have en-

* Gubbins, pp 2, 3, 198-9

† *Ib*, p 45

‡ As an instance of this, it is sufficient to refer to the achievements of Willoughby Osborne of Rewah, who triumphed over seemingly desperate odds simply because he had the sagacity and the resolution to act as though he possessed the amplest resources

abled him to spare a sufficient number of troops to form a small moveable column for supporting the civil and military officers in some at least of the out stations

Let it be granted, however, that, by disarming the sepoys at Lucknow, Lawrence would have precipitated mutiny at the out stations Even then the argument that to disarm would have been his best policy is not invalidated For, as a matter of fact, the sepoys at the out stations did rise without exception By his refusal then he gained nothing, whereas by the opposite policy he would at the least have rendered the Lucknow regiments powerless for mischief There would have been no need for him to include all the sepoys without exception in the measure He might have excerpted those whom he believed to be faithful, and formed them into a separate brigade for the support of the Europeans * Reviewing the question, then, by the light of history, it is impossible to deny that the policy which Gubbins recommended was the best policy, it is even possible that it might have blighted the crop of mutiny and rebellion throughout the whole of Oude

Mutiny of May 30

It soon appeared that, whatever the sepoys at the out stations might think of Lawrence's forbearance, those at Lucknow were resolved to take advantage of it On the 30th of May he was dining at the Cantonment Residency at Mariaon One of his staff, Captain Wilson, who was present, speaking from information supplied by a faithful sepoy, had warned him that mutiny would break out at the firing of the nine o'clock gun. Presently the report of the gun was heard Still there was no sign of riot Turning to Wilson, Lawrence remarked with a smile, "Your friends are not punctual." Hardly had he uttered the words before the crack of musketry was heard coming from the lines. The guests rose at once with their host, ordered their horses, and went outside the Residency door to wait for them. Directly opposite the group the native guard on duty was standing ranged in line. Their subahdar had turned them out on hearing the sound of firing, and now, saluting Wilson, asked whether he was to order his men to load Wilson referred the question to his chief. "Oh yes," replied Lawrence, "let him load." The men rammed their charges home, and then, raising

* General Cotton subsequently adopted a similar policy at Peshawur *Punjaub Mutiny Report*, p 69, par 76

their muskets till the tubes pointed straight at the Englishmen, proceeded to adjust the caps They had the life of the Chief Commissioner of Oude absolutely at their mercy But, if they meditated his murder, they were overawed by his resolute bearing "I am going," he cried, "to drive those scoundrels out of cantonments, take care while I am away that you all remain at your posts, and allow no one to do any damage here or enter my house, else when I return I will hang you" They did remain at their posts, and the Residency was almost the only house in the cantonments that was not either plundered or burned that night *

Meanwhile the Chief Commissioner had gone to quell the mutiny Discerning the paramount importance of preventing the mutineers from communicating with the disaffected citizens, he posted a European force to guard the road that led to the city. For the present, however, the mutineers were too busy to think of courting the support of the citizens On first rising, they had rushed down to one of the mess-houses to murder their officers, but, finding the dining-room deserted, they consoled themselves by setting fire to the building Nor was their longing for English blood wholly disappointed They shot their Brigadier as he was riding up to recall them to obedience Then, emboldened by success, they ventured to open fire on the detachment of the 32nd, but, receiving a shower of grape in reply, they broke and fled Meanwhile their comrades were swarming with horrid yells into the officers' bungalows, to plunder and destroy The English in the city caught the sound of firing, and, hurrying up on to the roofs of their houses, saw a lurid glare above the distant cantonment, and trembled for the fate of their countrymen Towards morning, however, a messenger arrived with the news that there was no cause for alarm The outbreak would have been more formidable if all the native regiments had joined in it But only one, the 71st, took an active part in mutiny, and even in its ranks not all were traitors Many of the other troops, indeed, went over to the mutineers, or slunk away from their lines before the night was over, but between five and six hundred men of the three infantry regiments boldly ranged themselves on the side of the Europeans. Next morning Lawrence, hearing that the mutineers had re-

May 31

* *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, pp 580-1, Gubbins, p 106.

treated to the race-course, marched thither to punish them They fled after a few discharges from his guns, but not before they had been joined by the bulk of the 7th Cavalry, who till then had remained faithful This defection rendered an effective pursuit impossible Only sixty prisoners were made, of whom Gubbins captured six with his own hand On the afternoon of the same day a rising took place in the city. The standard of the Prophet was raised, and some six thousand fanatics rallied round it, but they were easily dispersed by the efforts of the police * The strategy of Lawrence had prevented the coalescence of mutiny and sedition

Thus ended the second outbreak at Lucknow Summing up its results in a letter to Canning, Lawrence wrote, "We are now positively better off than we were We now know our friends and enemies "† This was true But the knowledge had been purchased at the cost of a mutiny, a street riot, and the lives of three British officers If Gubbins's counsel had been accepted, the enemies would never have dared to make themselves known, and many who had become enemies rather from following the example of others than from their own inclination, might have avowed themselves friends

Condition of Oude

While the events which have just been recorded had been passing at Lucknow, the country districts of Oude had remained tranquil. It is true that the district officers had discerned symptoms of excitement among their sepoys, and had begun to distrust the loyalty of the talookdars and the zemindars but throughout May the duties of Government were carried on as usual. While in many parts of the North-Western Provinces the fabric of Government was tottering to its fall, in Oude the courts everywhere remained open, and the revenue was punctually paid ‡ But, after the outbreak at Lucknow, the aspect of affairs suddenly changed The sepoys at Seetapore rose in rebellion, and murdered the Commissioner and another civilian, six officers, and several ladies and children The few who escaped separated into two parties One of these consisted of a young civilian, named Sir Mountstuart Jackson, his sister Madeline, Lieutenant Burnes, Surgeon-Major Morton,

June 3

* Gubbins, pp. 102–13, Wilson's *Diary of a Staff-Officer*, pp. 8–9, 177–9
† *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 577
‡ *Ib.*, pp 568, 576, Gubbins, pp 20, 118

and Sophy Christian, a little girl only three years old An authentic narrative of their adventures has been preserved, and forms one of the saddest of the many tales of suffering in which the history of the Mutiny abounds The fugitives made their way to Mythowlee, a fort belonging to a rajah named Lonee Sing, and begged him to take pity upon them. When they arrived they were worn out with fatigue, their clothes were in rags, and their bare feet were lacerated by the thorns of the jungle through which they had passed. The rajah did not pity them, but it suited his purpose to take them under his charge He therefore lodged them for the night in a cowshed, and, on the following evening, sent them to the fort of Kutchianee, a desolate unfurnished building in another part of his estates There they found Captain Philip Orr and his wife and child, who had escaped from the massacre of Aurungabad * The rajah now said that, as there were mutineers in the neighbourhood, he could not shelter the whole party Next day, therefore, the Orrs were sent out into the jungle. They had to keep fires burning at night to scare away the tigers and the wolves, and they were continually in dread of being found out by the mutineers who were roving in the neighbourhood After a few days they were told that, as the mutineers had dispersed, they might return to the fort There for some weeks the eight fugitives existed in hopeless misery The only news that reached them from the outer world was the news of the sufferings of their countrymen and the triumphs of the mutineers. Day after day they sat in solemn silence, for the only words that they could have truthfully spoken would have been words of despair. Early in August the rajah told them that, as another band of mutineers was coming, they must go forth again and hide in the jungle But he did not intend that they should find a hiding-place His vakeel† had told the sepoys at Lucknow where they were to be found, and an armed band was sent to destroy them From some mysterious cause, indeed, the intending murderers failed to penetrate the jungle. But the fugitives had little cause to rejoice over their escape The rays of the sun beat fiercely upon their heads;

Story of the fugitives from Seetapore

June 5

June 6

June 7

June 12

Aug 6

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* See p. 182, *supra*

† Agent or man of business.

and the thorny brushwood of the jungle was so low that they could find no shade. Torrents of rain poured down upon them. Wild beasts howled around them. Intermittent fever attacked them, and deprived them of all strength to bear up against their other sufferings. Little Sophy, who did not know that her mother had been murdered at Seetapore, was continually torturing them by asking why she had not come with them.

Aug 28. At last Orr received a letter, encouraging him to hope for an early rescue. He showed the letter to his companions, and, as they read and re-read it, hope, which had been long dead, revived in their hearts. But weeks passed away, and the expected escort never came to take them

Oct 20. to Lucknow. At last another and unexpected escort came. Lonee Singh, who had been watching the course of events, had become convinced that the star of the British had set for ever, and had sent three hundred of his retainers to deliver them over to the mutineers. The retainers seized them, dragged them out of the jungle, and, putting them into two carts, started with them for Lucknow. The carts jolted along till they reached a village in which the rajah's vakeel was waiting to receive the prisoners. This man owed his advancement in life to the kindness of Orr, and he was now in a position to make a return. He did so. He ordered chains to be riveted upon the hands and feet of the male prisoners. At the sight of the fetters Burnes went mad, and Morton fell into a convulsive fit. Mrs Orr fell down on her knees, and entreated the vakeel to spare her husband, his benefactor, the bitter shame of bonds. He answered her with a brutal laugh.

Then the prisoners were sent on their way. Once a day a scanty dole of nauseous food was thrown to them. They were allowed hardly any water. At last they reached Lucknow. Then the guards told them to get out of the carts, and led them towards the Kaiser Bagh. A mob collected, and thronged round them, staring at them, as they staggered along, and making merry over their shame and distress. When they entered the room in which they were to be confined, Jackson, who was now quite overcome, fell down in a swoon. The women, half maddened by protracted thirst, shrieked for water. At last it was brought to them, but in a vessel so foul that they revolted from bringing their lips to touch it.

Now began a second imprisonment, as bitter and as hopeless as that which the captives had endured in the fort of Kutchi-

ance. As day after day dragged by, Jackson became weaker and more emaciated, Morton was so sick that he could hardly eat the scanty food that was given to him, and Burnes was so weakened in mind that he did not know what was going on around him But their relief came at last On the morning of the 16th of November a number of sepoys burst into the room, and told the men to get up and come outside Jackson and Orr painfully dragged themselves to their feet, and bade the women good-bye Then, with Burnes and Morton, they submitted to be pinioned and led outside Presently a rattle of musketry was heard The gaolers told the women not to be alarmed,—some native prisoners had been executed, that was all. It was not till after some weeks that

Jan 7

Nov 24.

Madeline Jackson learned that she had lost her brother, and Mrs Orr her husband They had already lost their little companion, the orphan Sophy Two more months passed away. Then at last a ray of hope lighted up the gloom of their captivity There was a man called Wajid Ali, who, ever since their arrival in the Kaiser Bagh, had, at his own risk, endeavoured to lighten the burden of their sufferings He now succeeded in effecting the removal of Mrs Orr's child to a place of safety A few days

March 19

later he had Mrs Orr herself and Madeline Jackson carried to his own house Soon afterwards they were restored to their countrymen *

Mutinies in the districts

After the outbreak at Seetapore, mutiny became general throughout the province Whether influenced directly or indirectly by the example of the regiments at Lucknow, or by the pressure of the mutineers who kept streaming into Oude from the country beyond its eastern frontier,† every detachment without exception threw off control Their resolve was generally more pronounced, their action less hesitating than that of their comrades in the North-Western Provinces; but their treatment of their officers was as variable. Some simply dismissed them Others savagely murdered them Others dutifully watched over their safety Others sent them away unharmed, but took measures to have them waylaid and murdered. The fortunes of those Europeans who succeeded in escaping from

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* *The English Captives in Oude*, edited by M Wylie.

† *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p. 583.

their stations were of the most various kinds Some fled northwards, and perished from the deadly climate of the Terai Others were tracked down by bands of mutineers, and shot Others made their way, unharmed and unhindered, to Lucknow

Behaviour of the population.

Many of those who were saved owed their lives to the sympathy, or at least the forbearance, of the native population A few talookdars, indeed, showed hostility or refused shelter to fugitive parties. A few villagers insulted them in their distress But in most cases high and low alike treated the suppliant Europeans with genuine kindness Their conduct might have been very different if Lawrence had not laboured, as he had done, to repair the wrongs which they had suffered at the hands of his predecessors

In every instance the mutiny of a regiment was followed by the loss of the district to which it belonged, for the civil officers had no means of maintaining the authority which some of their brethren in the North-West exercised throughout the most trying periods of the crisis Within eleven days after the mutiny at Lucknow, there was not a single representative of the British Government to be found at any of the stations in Oude The downfall of authority was followed by its natural results. The talookdars saw their opportunity and used it Backed by their retainers, they rose almost to a man, forcibly ejected those upon whom their ill-gotten estates had been bestowed, plundered rich and defenceless citizens, wreaked vengeance upon old antagonists, and prepared, each with a view to his own profit, for a combined effort to expel the alien intruders from their last stronghold. The peasant cultivators, hardly noticing, untouched by the storm that was raging around them, tilled their fields as assiduously, and, in due season, reaped as plenteously as in the most peaceful times But the zemindars, the yeomen of the country, were less fortunately situated. If, on the one hand, the British Government had established a claim to their gratitude, if they had no reason to sympathise with the talookdars, who had robbed them of their landed rights, yet on the other hand, the British Government was a Government of aliens and infidels, the sepoy mutineers, whose ranks the talookdars were about to join, were their kinsmen and co-religionists, and would naturally look to them for support, while the talookdars were their natural chiefs, under whose lead they must place themselves,

if they wished to render that support effectual Paralysed by these conflicting considerations, the majority of the zemindars remained neutral, but the minority felt themselves bound by the ties of kinship and religion, and threw in their lot with the talookdars *

Affairs at Lucknow

Notwithstanding the overthrow of British authority in the districts, Lucknow itself still remained comparatively quiet. A gallows was erected over the Muchee Bhowun, and day after day batches of mutineers were summarily tried and hanged. Plots, it is true, were occasionally discovered but the seizure of the ringleaders struck terror into their accomplices, the military police, under their vigilant commandant, Captain Carnegy, kept the budmashes quiet, and the administration of justice went on as usual The worst symptom that appeared after the mutiny of the 30th of May was the slackness of trade. The native merchants and even the bank no longer carried on business, and Company's paper fell from twenty to seventy-five per cent discount. Still the merchants, though they had lost their confidence in the stability of British rule, were ready to support it as long as they could do so with safety. The ladies seldom ventured to stir beyond the precincts of the Residency but the chaplains continued to hold their services regularly, and even dinner-parties were still given and attended by the more sanguine. Henry Lawrence, however, was an altered man He had never known how to take life easily He had always lived in a state of bodily and mental tension, never satisfied that he had done enough, and habitually expending more nervous force than was sufficient to accomplish what he actually did. His emaciated figure and haggard face had already begun to show how anxiety and sleepless labour had told upon his health, when the heart-breaking announcements that reached him early in June utterly prostrated him. Feeling that he might break down at any moment, he telegraphed to Canning on the 4th,

Failing health of Lawrence

* *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, pp 569, 586, 593, Gubbins, pp 71–2, 118–43; Irwin, pp. 184–5, 187, *Oude Gazetteer*, vol i pp 184–5, 547; *Oude Administration Report for* 1858–9, p. 33, *Enclosures to Secret Letters from India*, June, 1858, p. 244, Wylie, Preface, pp iv and v It is important to notice that the talookdars in the districts of Gonda and Baraitch, who had lost comparatively very few villages by the settlement, were not a whit less active in revolt than their brethren.

begging that, if anything should happen to himself, Major Banks, the Commissioner of the Lucknow Division, might be allowed to succeed him as Chief Commissioner, and Colonel John Inglis of the 32nd as commander of the troops "This," he insisted, "is no time for punctilio as regards seniority They are the right men, in fact the only men for the places"

June 9

Five days later his exhaustion became so complete that he was obliged to delegate his authority to a provisional council, of which Gubbins was appointed President * The council sat for three days only; but that short period was an epoch in the history of the crisis.

The Provisional Council

Directly after the mutiny of the 30th of May, Gubbins had begun to besiege his chief with fresh arguments for the disarming of the sepoys Though between five and six hundred† only had proved faithful, more than twelve hundred still remained in the ranks Many even of their officers had lost all confidence in them, and lay down to sleep at night in the full belief that they might be murdered in their beds. While recommending that the entire body should be disarmed, Gubbins said that he would not oppose an exception in favour of those who had at least shown outward loyalty ‡ But though Lawrence was more than once on the point of yielding to his arguments, he never actually brought himself to take the decisive step. Now, however, Gubbins thought that he would at last get his own way. He so far succeeded that the other members of the council agreed to allow one company, which had shown positive signs of disaffection, to be disarmed, but they would not suffer the other troops to be included in the measure. Then Gubbins resolved to gain his end by a compromise. He persuaded his colleagues that it would be advisable for the commanding officers to induce their men to go home until November.

June 12

On the 12th of June the resolution was carried into effect but Lawrence became so excited on hearing of it that he dissolved the council, and sent messengers to recall all

* Wilson, p. 28, *Englishman*, June 11, 1857, Gubbins, p 115, Polehampton's *Memoirs*, pp 62–3, *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, pp 587–8, Rees, p 22, Lady Inglis's *Journal*

† Gubbins (p. 116) says only 437 See, however, Kaye, vol. iii p. 448, note †

‡ Gubbins, p 118 Neither Kaye (vol iii p 498), nor Malleson (vol. i. p 415) does justice to Gubbins on this point.

the sepoys who might wish to return About five hundred rejoined their colours, and vowed that they would stand by the Government to the last *

It was fortunate indeed that this faithful few had come back, for the English soldiers would have been far too few in number to defend the Residency in case of a siege Hoping to strengthen his little force still further, Lawrence issued a circular, inviting the pensioned sepoys to rally round their old flag In answer to the call, some hundreds of aged men, many of whom had lost their sight or their limbs in the service of the Company, came flocking into Lucknow About eighty of these were selected for active service This reinforcement, however, did not make up for a further diminution which the numbers of the garrison had lately suffered On the 11th the cavalry of the military police had risen in revolt, and gone off to join the rebels in the districts, and on the following morning the infantry had followed their example On hearing of the departure of the latter, Captain Gould Weston, the Superintendent of the entire corps, instantly mounted his horse, and, taking with him only two sowars as his escort, galloped after them, and overtook them, about five miles from the Residency They waited to hear what he might have to say. A few were so wrought upon by the force of his appeals that they left their comrades, and joined him, but the rest declared that they had gone too far to draw back One man, indeed, levelled his musket at Weston, but his comrades indignantly struck it down, exclaiming, "Who would kill such a brave man as this?"†

The pensioners

Mutinies of the military police

June 13

Meanwhile the work of strengthening and provisioning the Residency was going on apace After much doubt and consultation with his most trusted officers, Lawrence had at length given up the idea of defending the Muchee Bhowun, but he still made use of it as a storehouse for supplies.‡ His health was now much improved, and henceforth he was able to work without interruption He was still, however,

Idea of defending the Muchee Bhowun abandoned June 8

* See App D

† Rees, pp 55–6, 61, *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 590, Gubbins, p 169.

‡ Gubbins, pp. 145–6 Wilson, pp 10, 11, Innes, p 2, *Life of Sir H. Lawrence*, p. 590

harassed by the almost insubordinate urgency with which Gubbins criticised his measures, and offered suggestions of his own.* The Financial Commissioner vehemently argued that the British force, instead of remaining inactive at Lucknow, should march out and attack the rebels who were collecting in the neighbourhood; and many of the younger officers were so impressed by his daring and impetuous character that they began to regard him as the man for the crisis. At last Lawrence himself bowed to his will. For it is certain that it was owing to the influence which the whole tenour of Gubbins's previous arguments had exerted upon him, though not to any definite suggestion, that he took the step that immediately caused the siege of Lucknow.†

Suggestions of Gubbins.

On the 29th of June he was informed that a large rebel army, encouraged by the recent fall of Cawnpore, had collected near the village of Chinhut, about ten miles to the north-east, with the object of advancing to the attack of Lucknow. Thereupon he resolved to march out on the following morning as far as the Kokrail, a rivulet some four miles from the city, intending, if no enemy should be visible, to return at once, but hoping otherwise to strike such a blow as would defer for some time the inevitable siege. The force which he selected consisted of some seven hundred fighting men of all arms, of whom about half were Europeans. He had intended that the march should begin at daybreak: but the sun was high in the heavens before all the preparations were completed: the troops were exhausted by many previous days and nights of harassing duty; and, contrary to his orders, neither food nor drink had been served out to them. It was remarked by one who saw them start that they looked more as if they had gone through a hard day's work than as if they were going to begin one.‡ On reaching the Kokrail bridge, they halted. No enemy was in sight. The expected order to return was given;

Battle of Chinhut.

June 30.

* *Life of Sir H. Lawrence*, p. 593.

† Malleson (vol. i. p. 423) represents Lawrence as having eagerly seized the opportunity of attacking the rebels at Chinhut. This view is, I think, disproved by the evidence contained in an appendix to Kaye's third volume, pp. 669–71. Malleson's view is supported, but, as it seems to me, very feebly, in the *Life of Sir H. Lawrence*, pp. 603–4.

‡ Kaye, vol. iii. p. 503, note.

and the force countermarched. Presently, to the amazement of all, a countermand was issued, and the march was resumed *

The troops, stumbling wearily along a muddy and uneven road, were approaching a village called Ishmaelgunj, when suddenly a number of round shot came crashing into their midst, and immediately afterwards they caught sight of the enemy, who had hitherto concealed themselves behind a long row of trees, which stretched in front of the village of Chinhut Lawrence at once deployed his infantry into line between Ishmaelgunj and the road, ordered them to lie down, and opened fire upon the mutineers with his guns For some time an artillery duel was kept up. Then there was a lull in the firing of the enemy, which led Lawrence to believe that they were losing heart He was soon undeceived The mutineers, advancing with a steadiness that extorted the admiration of the British officers, were already threatening to outflank their handful of opponents, when the desertion of some of Lawrence's native gunners, and the flight of his native cavalry decided the fortune of the day In a few moments the enemy had captured Ishmaelgunj The British soldiers attempted to win it back, but they were too tired and disheartened to succeed, their leader, Colonel Case, was mortally wounded, and presently they fell back in confusion on the road Then Lawrence, seeing that he was in danger of being surrounded, gave the order to retreat The retreat soon became a rout The enemy's horse-artillery, galloping on either flank of the fugitives, harassed them with an unremitting discharge of grape Many of the 32nd were so exhausted that they deliberately lay down to die Those were most fortunate who managed to clamber on to the gun-carriages, or found a friendly trooper to let them cling to his stirrups At last the Kokrail bridge was reached The enemy's cavalry, however, had hastened to occupy this point, and now prepared to dispute the passage Then a little squadron of volunteers, who formed the only cavalry left after the desertion of the natives, per-

* *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, pp 600, 602 Lawrence was, of course, primarily responsible for having issued the countermand But I should be doing an injustice to his memory if I omitted to state that he issued it in consequence of information supplied by one of his officers, which, though of course given in perfect good faith, proved to be incorrect More than this I do not feel myself at liberty to say

formed a feat of arms which went far to wipe away the shame of that disastrous day With sabres flashing, they hurled themselves upon the dense masses in their front, but such was the terror which their charge inspired that, before they could strike a blow, the enemy broke and fled, leaving the bridge free Still the miseries of the retreat were not over. The bheesties* had deserted, and many who had escaped the enemy's fire might have perished from thirst, if the native women in the suburbs had not taken pity upon them and offered them water †

Meanwhile Lawrence himself had ridden on in advance with two of his staff, to break the news of the disaster to the Europeans in the Residency But many of them were already prepared for the worst Peering through the windows, they could plainly see their countrymen retreating before the overwhelming masses of the sepoys Soon a helpless mob of British soldiers came staggering up to the Residency verandah, and then ensued a dreadful scene of terror and confusion Labourers, who had been busily working at the unfinished defences, flung away their tools native servants deserted their masters women ran for their lives from the outposts, and huddled, in an agony of terror, into the rooms of the Residency; while the foremost bodies of the victorious rebels, dragging their guns into position, or swarming into the adjoining buildings, were already beginning to open fire The sun shone fiercely down upon Lucknow but the streets were deserted, and the silence was only broken by the shrieks of the wounded and the dying, the roar of artillery, and the ceaseless crack of musketry As the afternoon waned, fresh bodies of mutineers kept coming up to join their comrades at sunset their horse-artillery came dashing over the bridge soon their whole force had completely invested the British position, and the blaze of their watch-fires and the flash of their guns lighted up the darkness of the night, the first night of the siege of Lucknow ‡

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* Water-carriers

† Gubbins, pp 184–8, Captain Anderson's *Personal Journal of the Siege of Lucknow*, pp 52–3, Rees, pp 81, 86–90 Brigadier Inglis's Report (which is to be found in the *Parl Papers* and among the appendices to Malleson's 1st volume)

‡ Rees, p 91, Gubbins, p 191.

At first the women of the garrison, though within the past few weeks they had begun to learn something of the horrors of war, were thrown into an extremity of terror by the appalling din of the hostile cannonade, and expected every moment to see the mutineers come rushing over the feeble defences, and bursting into the rooms to murder them and their helpless children. But in their trouble they turned for consolation to that source from which, in the dark days of 1857, strong men and tender women alike drew comfort and support. The young wife of an officer of the garrison was sitting in her little room, trembling and hardly able to breathe from fear, when a friend, whose husband had fallen on the field of Chinhut, proposed that they should join in reading the Litany. Another lady was with them. The three women knelt down, and prayed fervently. When they rose to their feet, they were still much alarmed, but they could now talk calmly of their danger, for they felt that they were in the hands of the God of battles, and that, without His will, not all the fury of the enemy could harm them.*

A Commencement of the siege.

While the garrison of the Residency were threatened by such deadly peril, the Muchee Bhowun also was exposed to the enemy's fire. Lawrence saw that he must, at all hazards, make the attempt to transfer the troops who occupied it to the Residency, for the reinforcement of his slender garrison. On the second day of the siege three officers went up to the roof of the Residency, upon which a rude semaphore had been erected, and, though exposed to a heavy fire, succeeded in signalling to Colonel Palmer, the commandant of the Muchee Bhowun, to spike his guns, blow up the building, and bring his force into the entrenchment. The order was understood, but great anxiety was felt for the success of the operation. Fortune, however, favoured the enterprise. The enemy, suspecting nothing, had dispersed to plunder the city. Soon after midnight Palmer's little force marched noiselessly through the gates of the Residency, and a few minutes later a terrific explosion proclaimed that the Muchee Bhowun with its richly-stored magazine had been destroyed.†

July 1

Within the Residency the new comers found the wildest confusion prevailing. Everyone had expected to have to undergo

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* Lady Inglis's *Journal*

† Wilson, pp 42-5, Gubbins, pp 195-7

a siege; but the siege began before anyone was ready for it. Native servants, tempted by extraordinary rates of pay to expose themselves to the enemy's fire, were to be seen working with feverish haste at unfinished bastions Others took advantage of the general confusion to rob their masters. The chief of the Commissariat had been wounded at Chinhut; and, as his office was in consequence broken up, some of the camp-followers did not know where to apply for their rations, and deserted. Thus forsaken by their attendants, the artillery bullocks wandered helplessly about in search of food till they tumbled into wells, while horses went mad from thirst, and bit and kicked each other in their agony No one had time to relieve the sufferings of the wretched animals for the whole available strength of the garrison was barely sufficient to keep the enemy at bay.*

Death of Lawrence

While affairs were in this state, the garrison were afflicted by a calamity not less severe than the defeat at Chinhut On the morning of the 1st of July Lawrence was working in his own room with his secretary, when a shell burst at their feet Neither was injured, but Lawrence's staff earnestly begged him to remove to a less exposed room At first he refused, remarking with a smile that the enemy had no artilleryman good enough to throw another shell into the same spot, but afterwards he yielded, and promised to change his quarters on the following day. Early next morning he went out on a round of inspection, from which he returned about eight o'clock.

July 2.

When reminded by Captain Wilson of his promise, he replied that he was too tired to move then, but would do so without fail before the end of the morning Half an hour later he was lying on his bed, explaining to Wilson some instructions which he had just given him, when another shell crashed through the wall and burst The light of day was gone but a red glare lit up the darkness, and the stunning noise of the report was followed by the rattle of falling masonry For a moment no one spoke Then Wilson cried out, "Sir Henry, are you hurt?" Twice he called but there was no answer At last Lawrence replied in a low tone, "I am killed" When the dust and smoke cleared away, it was seen that the coverlet was crimson with blood Presently some

* Gubbins, pp. 193-5, 201-2

soldiers of the 32nd came in, and, gently lifting their wounded General, carried him to another room close by The doctor soon arrived, and, after examining the wound, saw at once that it was mortal.

All that day and part of the next Lawrence remained perfectly sensible Though opiates were freely administered to him, he suffered much, and shot and shell dashed unceasingly against the walls of the house in which he lay. but nothing could disturb his holy spirit, for he had long since found that peace which passeth all understanding His friends clustered round his bedside, and there was hardly one who did not shed tears When the dying man spoke of himself, it was with such humility as touched the hearts of all who heard him He desired that no epitaph should be inscribed upon his tomb but the words, "Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty May the Lord have mercy on his soul" He spoke most tenderly and affectionately of his children and his friends, his native servants, and all with whom he was in any way connected, sending for those to whom he thought he had ever done wrong or even spoken harshly, to beg their forgiveness, and expressing a special wish that Government would not allow the asylum which he had founded and maintained for the children of British soldiers to fall into decay. But, so long as he remained conscious, his chief thoughts were for the State which he had served faithfully for thirty years, and particularly for the people of Lucknow, Europeans and Asiatics alike, in whose service he had received his death-wound Summoning his most trusted officers around him, he made over the Chief Commissionership to Major Banks, and the command of the troops to Colonel Inglis, and then, after giving them his final directions for the conduct of the defence, besought them, with passionate earnestness, never to surrender After the evening of the 2nd, when he received the sacrament with his friends, he spoke but little, for he was now fast sinking, and early on the morning of the 4th he died A few soldiers were summoned to carry his corpse to burial. Before they lifted the couch on which it lay one of them raised the coverlet, and, stooping down, kissed the forehead of his dead General, and all the rest did the same Then they carried him out, and laid him in his rude grave, side by side with some private soldiers, who also, in their humbler sphere, had given their lives for their country. A short prayer was read, but it was no time to pay the formal

honours of war to the departed * Yet there was a salute not unworthy of the noblest hero of the old Bengal Artillery,—the thunder of the cannon which still bade defiance to the enemies of England

Brigadier Inglis, the officer who now commanded the garrison of Lucknow, had served with distinction in the second Sikh war Long before the outbreak of the Mutiny, he was well known all over the North-Western Provinces as a good officer and a keen sportsman † A plain, honourable, Christian gentleman, a tender husband, a staunch friend, a lover of all that was high and noble, a soldier of unsurpassable gallantry, respected and beloved by those who served under him, and capable of appreciating the opinions of his officers, he was the very man to defend a weak position obstinately to the last, by sheer dogged fighting, to fulfil the dying adjuration of Henry Lawrence, Never surrender

Brigadier Inglis

The position which he had to defend was indeed one which only the most dogged fighting could for a moment have maintained against such an overwhelming force as now surrounded it The mention of a siege suggests the idea of a fortress, but by no stretch of the imagination could such a title have been bestowed upon the place of refuge within which the Lucknow garrison were collected It consisted of a number of detached dwelling-houses and other buildings, of which the Residency itself was the most conspicuous, defended only by rude mud walls and trenches Even if there had been full time for the construction of these improvised works, they would have moved the laughter of the youngest cadet who was then studying fortification at Woolwich; but, when the siege began, they were still unfinished. Only two of the batteries which stood at intervals along the line of entrenchment were ready for use Indeed, according to all recognised principles of military science, the position was indefensible.

The position which he had to defend

The conditions of the combat were rendered still more unequal by the discrepancy between the numbers of the com-

* *Sketches and Incidents of the Siege of Lucknow*, by C H. Mecham and George Couper, *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, pp 609–14, Wilson, pp. 45–6, 49

† Russell's *Diary in India*, vol. ii. p 406

batants. When the siege began, the assailants mustered at least six thousand trained soldiers,* who were soon reinforced by a large and constantly increasing number of talookdars and their retainers. The garrison, on the other hand, exclusive of women and children, amounted only to sixteen hundred and ninety-two souls † Of those who were available for active service a large proportion were natives, some of whom were regarded with suspicion, while others were infirm old men. But the slender force of British soldiers and civilians, backed by the loyal sepoys, were animated by an unconquerable resolution to defend themselves and their women to the last With the example of Cawnpore before them, they knew what they might expect in case they should be overcome, and each man resolved to act, and did act as though upon his constancy and valour alone depended the safety of the garrison, the honour of his country, the existence of the imperilled empire

The besieged and the besiegers.

Lawrence had calculated that by great efforts it might be possible to protract the defence for a fortnight‡, and four days had already elapsed when Inglis assumed command During the whole of this time the action of the enemy had hardly ceased, except when they quitted their posts to plunder the bazaars in the city Many of the buildings which they occupied were within easy pistol-shot of the British outposts, and, aiming securely through the loop-holes which they had made in the walls, their marksmen kept up a galling musketry fire, beneath which many of the garrison had already fallen During the first week of the siege from fifteen to twenty deaths occurred every day, and, even after experience had taught the defenders to be less reckless in exposing themselves, the daily average for some time did not fall below ten No place within the entrenchment was absolutely safe. Several wounded soldiers were killed as they lay on their beds in hospital Women, on rising in the morning, often found bullets lying on the floor within a few inches of their pillows § The besieged, however, on their part, were not idle Each house was defended by a separate little garrison under a responsible commandant, and, when the staff-officer came round

The siege

* Gubbins, p 190 † *Ib*, p 354.

‡ *Life of Sir H Lawrence*, p 602.

§ Rees, pp 128–9, 187, Polehampton, pp 354–5.

at night to collect reports, the occupants of the several posts were cheered by the news of what their comrades had achieved during the day, and were able to recount their own exploits for the information of the Brigadier

The fortnight for which Lawrence had hoped that the defence might be prolonged passed away, and still the position was resolutely maintained In fact, though the enemy had once or twice made a show of advancing to the attack, they had not yet dared to attempt that general assault, which, if it had been delivered with a resolution to win, might, on the first day of the siege, have given them the victory. At last, however, they did summon up courage to make the attempt

On the night of the 19th of July they suddenly ceased firing but on the following morning an unusual movement was discernible in their ranks Warned by the look-out men to be on the alert, the garrison sprang to their posts, and stood breathlessly waiting Even the wounded left their beds, and, with pale faces and tottering steps, came down to join in the defence At ten o'clock, a mine, which had been sunk close inside the outer line of defences, exploded with terrific force, and, when the smoke had cleared away, the rebels opened a heavy fire of round shot and musketry, under cover of which they rushed to the assault But, though they held on till they were close under the walls, and even attempted to plant their scaling-ladders; though the leader of one of their columns, waving a green standard above his head,* leaped with magnificent audacity right into the ditch in front of a battery, and was followed by his comrades till he himself was shot dead, yet the defenders, Englishmen and Asiatics alike, poured such a concentrated fire into their ranks, that, after four hours' desperate fighting, the whole attacking force fell back, defeated and disheartened † The attack had failed because, bravely though the rebels had fought, they had shrunk from pressing onwards through the storm of shot and bullets, and into the forest of bayonets, with one continuous rush, by the force of which, though the ditches had been filled with the bodies of the slain, the survivors would have hewn their way at last through the living rock which opposed them.

July 20

The losses of the enemy on this day were very severe, while,

* Rees, pp 143-56, Wilson, p 68, Gubbins, pp 221-2.
† *Ib*, p. 225.

on the side of the garrison, only four men were killed, and twelve wounded. But the significance of the action is not to be estimated by its immediate material results. The besieged gained increased self-reliance by their victory. The besiegers, conscious that their defeat was due to moral inferiority, lost much of the spirit and enthusiasm with which they had hitherto fought On the following day, however, the garrison sustained a serious loss Major Banks, while rashly bending over a wall to watch the operations of the enemy, was shot through the temples Gubbins, who, a fortnight before, had importunately written to him, asserting that the dignity of Chief Commissioner was lawfully his own, now urged his right to succeed him but Inglis, not caring to work with so troublesome a colleague, refused to admit the claim, and declared that the office should remain in abeyance until the decision of Government should be made known It is only fair to add that Gubbins himself afterwards admitted that there had been no necessity for the continuance of civil authority.

July 21.

Notwithstanding their recent successes, it was impossible that the garrison should not feel anxious when they reflected on what lay before them The siege had now lasted three weeks, and as yet there had been no sign of coming relief. But on the night of the 21st of July a pensioner named Ungud succeeded in passing the enemy's sentries, and making his way into the entrenchment A crowd of eager questioners soon thronged round him He told them that General Havelock had defeated the Nana Sahib in three pitched battles, and was at that moment in possession of Cawnpore. The news was received with all the more joy because the garrison had daily expected to see the army of the Nana march up to reinforce their assailants On the next day Ungud went out again with a letter of information for Havelock Three days afterwards he returned with the reply that in less than a week the relieving army would arrive.*

July 22.

July 25.

Meanwhile the enemy, disappointed in their attempt to storm the position, were striving to overpower its defenders by sheer weight of metal. They were busily erecting new batteries. But their great resource was mining. There was, however, an officer within the entrenchment, whose skill and untiring

* Gubbins, pp 226-8, Hutchinson's *Mutinies in Oude*, p 174.

activity confounded their devices, Captain Fulton of the Engineers, a man whom the survivors of the siege singled out for special honour among the defenders of Lucknow Gathering round him a number of old Cornish miners belonging to the 32nd, he made them sink a countermine wherever the muffled sounds of pickaxe and crowbar revealed to their practised ears that the rebels were at work underground He himself would often descend into the shaft with a lantern and a pistol, and, waiting patiently till the enemy's workmen had burrowed their way up to him, shoot the foremost man dead *

Thus day after day passed Ungud had again left the entrenchment, taking with him diagrams of the position and its environs for the guidance of Havelock but, though the more sanguine sometimes declared that they could hear the sound of distant firing, the promised reinforcements did not come Many of the natives were greatly disheartened, and even the British soldiers began to lose hope, and sometimes broke out into fits of ill-temper or insubordination Some, when rebuked for exposing themselves unnecessarily to the enemy's fire, answered that it did not matter whether they were killed then or later Disease had begun to waste the ranks, and day by day men saw their comrades falling round them. But it was the extraordinary hardships and privations which they endured that bore most heavily upon them Even in the first week of the siege they had been on duty from thirteen to twenty hours a day; and now, while their numbers and their strength were diminishing, their work was steadily increasing. Officers and men stood sentry without distinction After remaining at their posts all day under a burning sun, they were summoned at night to distribute stores and ammunition, to repair the shattered defences, or to bury the dead Their scanty sleep was broken by constant alarms When the rainy season set in, they were wetted to the skin as they lay in the trenches, and many of them had no change of clothes. Myriads of flies buzzed round them when they tried to rest, and swarmed over their food when they sat down to eat. They had little rum or tobacco; and their native allies had none of the condiments which to them were almost a necessary of life † The Brigadier himself had scarcely any rest. When he came in after a hard

* Gubbins, p 236, Mecham and Couper.
† Malleson, vol. i p 487.

day in the trenches, he was generally so tired that he could hardly speak. Yet he was always at his post, his cheery and hopeful spirits never forsook him; and, when his labours were most engrossing, he always found time to visit the hospital, and share his cigars with his wounded soldiers * And those who served under him, soldiers and civilians, sepoys and hoary pensioners, bore up manfully, and worked and fought on with a grim resolve to endure unto the end, whatever the end might be.

The women had their share of suffering and of toil. Some spent hours in the stifling hospital, talking to the soldiers and ministering to their wants Others, whose families required all their attention, with a heroism less conspicuous but not less real, cheerfully performed the menial drudgery which the desertion of their servants threw upon them, endured without a murmur the hardships of heat, of bad food, and of overcrowding, and inspired their husbands with new courage. Like the stern defenders of Londonderry, they and the men who fought for them sought courage to do and patience to suffer by frequent religious exercises Every Sunday service was held in more than one improvised place of worship Every day prayers were said in outposts and inner rooms †

So the siege progressed till, on the 10th of August, the enemy varied the monotony of their ordinary operations by a second assault They began, as before, by firing a mine, which blew down a portion of one of the houses, and tore open a breach fully ten yards in width in the outer defences, but, though some of them advanced close up under the walls, and dared even to seize hold of the muskets of their opponents, though they renewed their attack again and again throughout the day, yet, as before, they failed to exhibit that tenacity which would have sustained them in the critical moment, and at night they were obliged again to confess that they were beaten On the 18th of August, however, they very nearly succeeded in wiping out the shame of their defeat. The explosion of a mine, which was, as usual, the signal for their attack, again destroyed a portion of the wall, blew up an out-house, and hurled two officers and three sentries into the air. The officers and two of

* Rees, p. 170, Wilson, pp. 53, 87, Anderson, p. 91, Lady Inglis *Journal*

† *Ib*; Gubbins, p. 246.

the sentries fell down inside the works, and picked themselves up almost unhurt. but the other sentry, falling into the road, was killed by the enemy, and seven men were buried alive beneath the ruins The smoke floated away· but the rebels stood still, hesitating to advance Then one of their leaders dashed forward, sprang on to the top of the breach, and, waving his sword, shouted to the men to follow In a moment a bullet struck him dead another officer, who pressed after him, fell as quickly, and the storming party were too terrified to attempt to enter the breach But the utmost efforts of the garrison could not prevent the enemy from gaining possession of a house, which the breach had left exposed. Inglis, however, resolved to expel them. Though warned by the engineer officers that success was impossible, the undaunted Brigadier called up his little reserve of eighteen men; caused boxes, doors, and planks to be piled up as a barricade; brought up a gun to enfilade the breach, and before night drove out the rebels at the point of the bayonet

On the 5th of September the besiegers made a last attempt to storm but, though they advanced with considerable determination, the garrison gained an almost bloodless victory, and carts loaded with dead and wounded rebels were seen crossing the bridge at evening towards cantonments *

The siege had now lasted sixty-seven days, and within that time the garrison had repelled four general assaults, had met every mine with a countermine, had made several sorties, and, without yielding an inch of the ground which they occupied, had blown up several of the surrounding houses, captured another, and driven the enemy from their strongest advanced post Yet it was doubtful whether they would be able to hold out till reinforcements should arrive They had learned that Havelock, after attempting to march to their relief, had been twice obliged to fall back upon Cawnpore, and on the 29th of August Ungud had brought a letter from him, in which he implied that it would be impossible for him to reach Lucknow before twenty-five days, and delivered the ominous warning, "Do not negotiate, but rather perish sword in hand"† After this letter was received, numbers of the natives deserted Those

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* Gubbins, pp 263–4, 288, Rees, p 193, Brigadier Inglis's Report; Innes, p 11, Lady Inglis's *Journal*.

† Marshman's *Memoirs of Sir H Havelock*, p 388.

who remained were becoming so despondent that it needed all the arguments and soothing assurances of the British officers to strengthen their expiring loyalty. About a third of the European soldiers had perished in the siege; and the survivors were dreadfully depressed by the manifold trials which they had undergone. The Brigadier had not slept with his clothes off since the 16th of May, and was so exhausted by toil and anxiety that those about him daily feared he would break down. Many who escaped the enemy's fire were prostrated by low fever; many perished from small-pox or from cholera. Since the beginning of the siege there had been only two days on which a funeral had not taken place. The wounded were in evil plight; for the want of proper food and ventilation impaired their chances of recovery, and where amputation was necessary, it invariably failed. Everyone was sickened by foul smells exhaled from decaying offal or from stagnant water. Though there was no reason to fear actual starvation, the rations had been reduced, and all provisions not included in rations were at famine prices. A pound of coarse flour cost a shilling, a ham four pounds ten shillings, a dozen of beer seven pounds. There was not a house that was not riddled with shot, and some had fallen, burying the inmates under their ruins. Some of the men had been heard to declare that, if the place were to fall, they would shoot their wives with their own hands rather than suffer them to fall into the power of the rebels.*

While the garrison were in this dreadful situation, Ungud, stimulated by the promise of five thousand rupees if he should succeed in his mission, was sent out for the last time with despatches for Havelock.†

Sept 16

Before the year 1857, Henry Havelock, the one actor in the Indian Mutiny whose name and achievements are familiar to every Englishman, had scarcely been heard of outside India. Yet, in the course of the forty-one years for which he had served the Crown, he had fought in twenty-two fights in Burmah, Afghanistan, Gwalior, and the Punjaub; he had supported the wavering resolution of the heroic Sale within the walls of Jellalabad; he had inspired the counsels that won the victory of Istaliff; and Sir

Henry Havelock.

* Marshman's *Memoirs of Sir H Havelock*, p 383; Gubbins, pp 273-5, 277-8, 349, 354; Rees, pp 199, 205; Mrs Case's *Day by Day at Lucknow* p 178; Polehampton, p. 336; Wilson, pp. 116, 129, 135, 149.

† Gubbins, p. 297

Henry Hardinge had said of him, "If ever India should be in danger, the Government have only to place Havelock at the head of the army, and it will be saved." His services, though recognised, had not been rewarded. But, while he chafed bitterly against official neglect, he was sustained under all his trials and disappointments by the abiding conviction that God's Providence was watching over him, and would order the events of his life for the best Early in his Indian career he had become a Baptist. Intense, however, as was his devotion to his adopted creed, he was too great a man to degenerate into a bigot. He could sympathise with earnestness of purpose, whatever the speculative principles that directed it might be Some of his warmest friends, men like Archdeacon Hare and George Broadfoot, differed widely from him on questions of religious belief. But there were not many whom he admitted to the privilege of his friendship It must not indeed be imagined that he was a gloomy ascetic he was liked by many wild young officers who had little in common with him*, but he was generally reserved and unbending in manner, and had little of the easy geniality that made Outram so popular. He was not a man of imposing presence but a keen observer would have felt, on first seeing him, that he was a good man, an able man, and one whose regard was worth winning, but not to be won lightly Rather below the middle height, he was of a slender, but well-formed and erect figure; his hair had grown grey, but still covered his head; his forehead was high, broad, and square, the expression of his eyes was strangely piercing and intense, but quite calm, he had an aquiline nose, his lips were tightly compressed and shaded by a grey moustache, and his sharply moulded jaw and firm chin were fringed by a beard and whiskers of the old-fashioned cut His whole bearing was that of a man who, having chosen the straight and narrow way, walked along it with a firm but not with a free tread. By a patient self-discipline, carried on day after day for long years, he had come actually to realise that ideal after which many of us, in our better moments, aspire· no perplexities could make him hesitate for long, because he was quite sure that there must be a *right* path to follow, and that the Spirit of God would guide him into that path. no dangers could appal him, because

* Colonel Ramsay's *Recollections of Military Service and Society*, vol. i. p 255.

he really *believed* that nothing was to be feared, except falling into sin The dominant feature of his character was a stern, serious, ever-present sense of duty, vitalised and regulated by an habitual study of the will of God. It was this sense of duty that led him, conscious as he was of military genius, to submit with patience to the galling trial of supersession by his inferiors, and cheerfully to obey those whom he was by nature qualified to command to labour on, with punctilious accuracy, at the minutest details of his profession; to overcome his natural timidity until men refused to believe that he knew what fear was*; to persevere, in spite of the ridicule of his brother-officers, in giving religious instruction to his soldiers It was this sense of duty too that enabled him to wait patiently for the fulfilment of the absorbing ambition of his life, and to resign that ambition when he believed that there was no longer any hope of its being fulfilled For there was one passion which burned with a more constant flame in Havelock's breast than even the passion of religious enthusiasm While he was campaigning in the swamps of Burmah, while he was enduring the weariness of deferred promotion, while he was mastering the technicalities of the Deputy Adjutant-General's office at Bombay, perhaps even while he was expounding the Bible to his soldiers, he cherished in his inmost heart a longing desire to command a British army in the field For more than forty years he had been qualifying himself to fulfil his dream He was familiar with every axiom of Vauban and Jomini, he could describe from memory every evolution of Marlborough and Wellington, of Frederic and Napoleon And now, when he was old and grey-bearded, looking forward only to repose in a Swiss or Tyrolese cottage, the opportunity for which he had almost ceased to hope was suddenly thrown in his path. For, on the 20th of June, just after his return from the Persian expedition, he was appointed by Sir Patrick Grant to command a movable column, which was to be formed at Allahabad, for the relief of Lucknow and Cawnpore, and the destruction of all mutineers and insurgents in North-Western India.† There were some critics who, decrying him as a mere

He is chosen to command a column for the relief of Cawnpore and Lucknow

* Marshman, p 449 Marshman was Havelock's brother-in-law, and knew him intimately for thirty years.

† Marshman, pp. 265–6.

closet strategist, and ignorant of the self-reliance, the boldness, the judgment, and the coolness which would enable him to turn his theoretical knowledge to account, ventured to carp at the selection. His task was indeed a difficult one, his material resources were inadequate, and the season was unfavourable for campaigning, but, overjoyed at the approaching realisation of his hopes, he was in a temper to overcome every obstacle Nor did he forget, in his exaltation, to turn for help to the Power which had supported him in his depression "May God give me wisdom," he wrote to his wife, "to fulfil the expectations of Government, and to restore tranquillity to the disturbed districts"* On the 25th of June he left Calcutta Those who noted his emaciated figure and worn face predicted that, before the end of a week, he would succumb to the hardships of campaigning † They did not know the strength of the spirit which sustained his feeble frame

His preparations at Allahabad.

Early on the 30th of June he reached Allahabad For some days past Neill had been preparing, in the face of difficulties which would have appalled a less determined nature, to despatch a column to the relief of Cawnpore Cholera had more than decimated his troops, and the native contractors, robbed by the insurgents, or dreading to approach the incensed Feringhees, could not be prevailed upon to furnish supplies and carriage But at last the energy of Neill had prevailed; and, on the same day on which Havelock arrived, Major Renaud of the Madras Fusiliers marched out at the head of the column, with instructions to attack and destroy all places on or close to his route occupied by the enemy, but to encourage the inhabitants of all others to return On the 3rd of July a steamer was sent up the Ganges, with a hundred Fusiliers on board under Captain Spurgin, to co-operate with Renaud, and cover his flank ‡ Meanwhile Havelock was busily directing the organisation of his force, and personally supervising the execution of the minutest details Remembering the evils which Anglo-Indian commanders had often suffered for want of an efficient Intelligence Department, he had induced the Government to entrust him with a liberal sum for the payment of his spies. While he was in the midst of these preparations, he received the news of

* Marshman, p. 279 † Ib, p. 404.
‡ Ib, p. 283, *Parl. Papers*, vol xxx (1857), p. 594.

the destruction of Wheeler's force. His anxiety to be up and doing now became more intense than ever; but for some days longer he was imprisoned at Allahabad by the same obstacles that had hindered Neill When he was at last able to move, some of his requirements were still unprovided He had asked for a supply of light summer clothing for his men, but many of them were obliged to continue to wear their heavy woollen tunics throughout the whole campaign Nor were their numbers such as to make up for the deficiencies in their equipment Exclusive of Renaud's little column, the whole force consisted of no more than one thousand British soldiers, drawn from the 64th, the 84th, the 78th Highlanders, and the 1st Madras Fusiliers, a hundred and thirty of Brasyer's Sikhs, eighteen volunteer cavalry and six guns. The cavalry were composed of unemployed officers, indigo-planters, and burnt-out shopkeepers, whom Havelock had himself raised to supply the lack of regular troopers, and the guns were almost entirely manned by invalid artillerymen, and infantry soldiers who had but just learned the rudiments of gun-drill* Such was the army with which Havelock started, in the height of an Indian summer, to accomplish the herculean labour which had been set him

Composition of his column

On the afternoon of the 7th of July, under a heavy storm of rain, the column defiled through the streets of Allahabad, scowled upon by the townspeople, who had clustered in their doorways to watch its departure † Ploughing through the slush and drenched by the rain, the soldiers, as they left the city behind, saw in front and on either side a vast and dreary waste dotted with the charred ruins of forsaken villages. Not a living man was to be seen; only here and there some loathsome swine gnawing the flesh from a dead body It seemed as though the destroying angel had passed over the land Renaud, not interpreting his instructions too literally, had put to death every man upon whom a shadow of suspicion could be thrown, and Havelock's soldiers smiled grimly as they pointed to the dark corpses which hung from the sign-posts and the trees along the

He marches from Allahabad

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* Marshman, pp 278, 280, 284.

† *Ib*, p 289 "Most of the Hindoos appeared to be either indifferent or apprehensive, but wherever a Mahometan was seen there was a scowl on his brow"—*Saturday Review*, Sept 9, 1857, p. 260

road.* For the first three days Havelock advanced leisurely, out of consideration for his younger soldiers, but, notwithstanding this precaution, many of the Fusiliers fell behind, tired and footsore. Learning, however, from his spies that the insurgents were advancing in great force from Cawnpore, and fearing that Renaud would fall into their hands, he resolved, at all hazards, to quicken his pace, and at one o'clock on the morning of the 12th overtook his lieutenant, and marched on with him to within four miles of Futtehpore Colonel Tytler, one of the staff officers, was sent on with the volunteer cavalry to reconnoitre The rest of the troops were busily cooking their breakfasts or smoking their pipes, when suddenly the cavalry were seen returning, and the enemy's white-clad troopers emerging from the distant trees on the edge of the plain, and pressing after them in hot pursuit. Almost immediately afterwards a twenty-four-pound shot struck the earth within two hundred yards of the spot where the General was standing The soldiers flung their cooking utensils aside, seized their arms, and fell into their ranks Meanwhile, the enemy's cavalry, believing from the slender appearance of Tytler's escort that they had only Renaud's small force to deal with, were galloping over the plain in the assurance of an easy victory, when, seeing the whole British army drawn up in battle array to meet them, they reined up their horses like men paralysed by a sudden fear. The General allowed them no time to recover from their surprise The infantry advanced, covered by skirmishers, who, with their Enfield rifles, kept up an incessant fusillade· Captain Maude, of the Royal Artillery, pushed forward his guns to within point-blank range, and opened a deadly fire, and the rebels, compelled by his attack and by the steady pressure of the infantry to relax their hold upon the strong position which they had occupied, were driven through and out of the town of Futtehpore, and, after making one vain attempt to rally, were put to final and irretrievable flight. All their guns had been captured, and not a single British soldier had fallen †

Battle of Futtehpore

Havelock was in an ecstasy of delight over his first victory.

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* Trevelyan's *Cawnpore*, pp 323-4, Russell, vol. i p. 159, vol. ii. p 402; *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857-58) Part 1, p 23, No 13.

† Marshman, p 292, *Saturday Review*, Sept 19, 1857, p 260, *Parl Papers*, vol. xxx (1857), pp 631-3

He sent an elaborate despatch to the Deputy Adjutant-General of the Army. To his wife he wrote hastily, "One of the prayers oft repeated since my school-days has been answered, and I have lived to command in a successful action. . Among them was the 56th, the very regiment which I led at Maharajpore. . I challenged them 'There's some of you that have beheld me fighting; now, try upon yourselves what you have seen in me!' But away with vain glory! Thanks be to God who gave me the victory"*

The soldiers were suffered to plunder Futtehpore, in retribution for the recent rebellion of its inhabitants, and then, after sending back a hundred Sikhs, in compliance with an earnest request which Neill had made for reinforcements, Havelock marched on Soon after day-break on the 15th, the enemy were again discovered, strongly entrenched at the village of Aong. They began the battle by advancing to a group of houses about two hundred yards in front of their position but the Madras Fusiliers speedily dislodged them, and Colonel Tytler, advancing with a portion of the force, completed their defeat The victory, however, was dearly bought, for the gallant Renaud, while leading on his regiment, had fallen mortally wounded †

July 15

Battle of Aong

Two battles had now been won but there was no rest for the victors, for before noon news was brought that the enemy, strongly reinforced from Cawnpore, had rallied at the Pandoo nuddee, an unfordable river six miles distant, and were preparing to blow up the bridge which spanned it. Knowing that, if they succeeded in their design, his progress to Cawnpore would be indefinitely retarded, the General called upon his troops for a fresh effort. Exhausted by a five hours' march and a severe action, fought under a nearly vertical sun, they were lying down waiting for breakfast, but now, full of confidence in their General, and inspired by his self-denying example, they sprang to their feet at the word of command, and cheerily pushed on The road ran through groves of mango-trees As the head of the column, emerging from these, came in sight of the bridge, they saw two puffs of white smoke rise from a low ridge in their front. two loud reports followed; and two twenty-four-pounders crashed

Battle of the Pandoo nuddee

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* Marshman, p. 296.

† Ib, pp. 297, 299, 300.

into their midst, and wounded several The British artillery moved steadily down the road, and unlimbered close to the stream. Then Maude, enveloping the bridge with the fire of his guns, replied effectively to the enemy's challenge · the Fusiliers with their Enfield rifles lined the bank, and picked off their gunners, and presently the right wing of the same regiment, noting their bewilderment and hesitation, closed up, charged over the bridge, captured their guns, and forced them to retreat towards Cawnpore *

Battle of Cawnpore.

The British, now completely exhausted, threw themselves upon the ground, and many of them, caring for nothing but rest, rejected the food which was offered them Rising only half-refreshed after a night of intolerable heat, they found their meat already spoiled, and threw it away in disgust The rays of the sun smote them with a fierceness which they had never before experienced even in this fiery campaign man after man reeled out of the ranks, and fell down fainting on the ground, but Cawnpore was now only twenty-three miles off, and those whose strength held out, sustained by the hope of rescuing the remnant of their country-women, and inflicting a terrible vengeance upon the Nana and his accomplices, tramped doggedly on After advancing sixteen miles, the General suffered his troops to rest awhile under the shade of some trees Presently two sepoys came in, and informed him that the Nana had marched out of Cawnpore at the head of five thousand men, to do battle for his throne The rebel army was drawn up in the form of a crescent, with its centre and its horns protected by fortified villages, at each of which guns were posted The Grand Trunk Road, along which the Nana believed that the British must advance, ran between the centre and the right of the crescent, and his artillery, supported by the flower of his infantry, was laid so as to check their progress. Havelock, however, contrived a plan to baffle his calculations He saw that his own troops would suffer

* Marshman, pp 301–2, *Parl Papers*, vol. xliv (1857–58) Part 1, p. 120, *Saturday Review*, Sept 19, 1857, p 261 "It was universally remarked," says the writer in the *Saturday Review*, "how much closer and fiercer the mutineers fought that day. The inferior details of their movements were perfect, but the master mind was wanting Hence the sepoys always came into action very well, but, as the battle went on, got bothered and made a mess of it." Havelock's loss in the actions at Aong and the Pandoo nuddee amounted to 1 killed and 25 wounded. *Parl. Papers*, *ut supra*, p. 121.

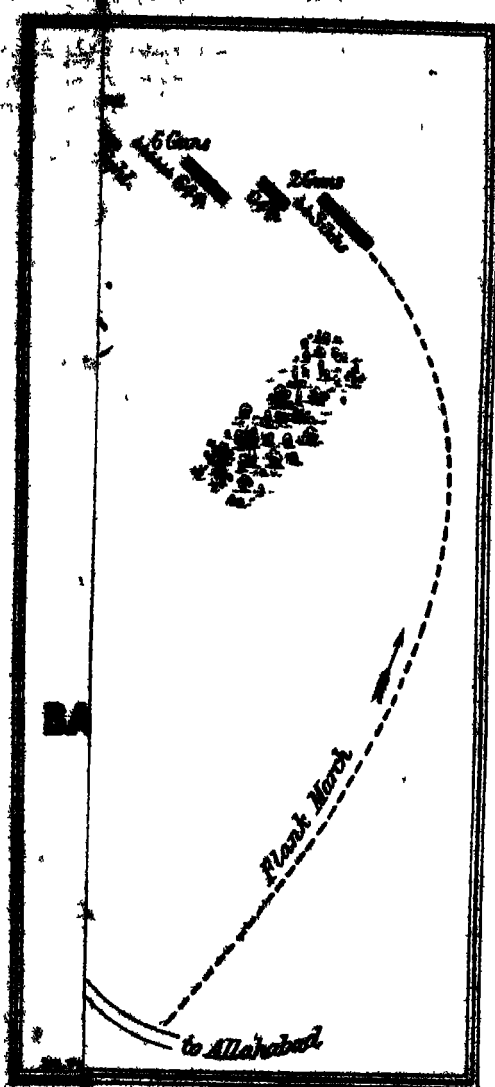
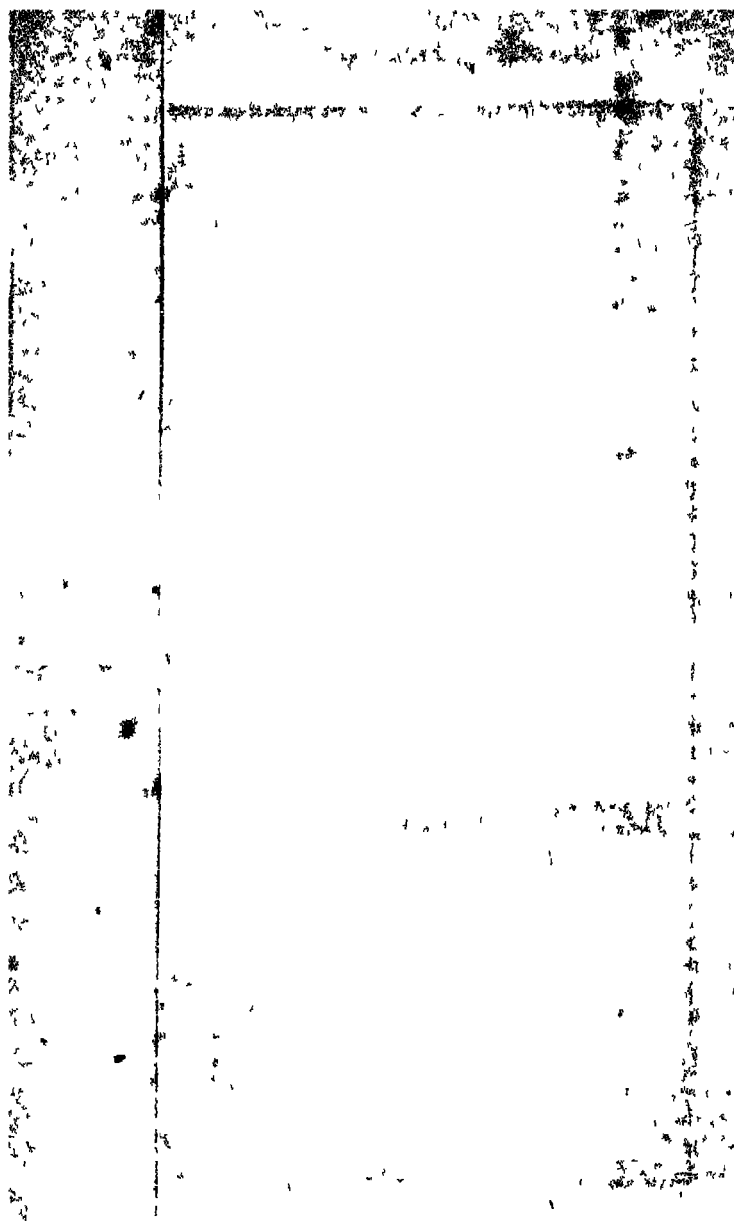
heavily by making a front attack, and therefore, after closely questioning some villagers as to the nature of the country, he determined, "like old Frederick at Leuthen," as he afterwards wrote, to attack the rebels on their left flank. Sending his handful of cavalry to occupy their attention, he marched himself with the infantry and artillery, to execute the principal movement The troops advanced stealthily behind a wood till the enemy, catching sight of them through a gap in the trees, opened fire upon them. Still they moved steadily on, controlling their eagerness to reply Not till the whole column, having at length cleared the wood, was in the act of wheeling into line, did the rebels fully understand what was in store for them. Then too late they hastily endeavoured to change front. Their artillery, however, continued pouring destruction into the British ranks, and Havelock, seeing that his light field-pieces could not silence the hostile fire, ordered the Highlanders to charge Colonel Hamilton led the way, and his men, formed in a dense mass, followed him like a moving wall, without firing a shot, or uttering a sound, till they were within eighty yards of the guns Then the word was given to charge the pipers blew the pibroch, and the Highlanders, raising a shout which thrilled the hearts of their comrades, and appalled the spirit of the enemy, sprang forward with fixed bayonets, mastered the gunners, captured the village, and drove the entire left wing into headlong rout Presently a portion of the fugitives, falling back on the centre, rallied and formed again but the Highlanders, again appealed to by their General, and now aided by the 64th, started forward again, again put them to flight, and captured the village in which they had rallied, while the eighteen volunteer horsemen, who had but just come up, seizing the opportunity to show what they could do, flung themselves upon the disordered masses, and completed their discomfiture Meanwhile the right wing of the Nana's army had been driven from their position · but Havelock, seeing that they too were attempting to rally, cried, as he glanced along the ranks of his men, "Come, who'll take that village, the Highlanders or the 64th?" and the two regiments, vying with each other in the swiftness with which they responded to his challenge, cleared the village with a single rush.

The battle was to all appearance over. The enemy, beaten at all points, were in full retreat towards Cawnpore. Suddenly, however, they faced about: their band struck up a defiant air:

the Nana was seen riding from point to point along their ranks; and a reserve gun, planted by his command in the middle of the road, vomited forth a new fire The British, lying down in line to await the arrival of the artillery, suffered heavily, the artillery-bullocks, worn out by the length of the march, were unable to drag the guns to their assistance, and the enemy, emboldened by the signs of hesitation which they perceived, threatened in their turn to assume the offensive Then the General, seeing that the crisis of the battle had arrived, gave the order for a final charge Excited by the sound of his clear, calm voice to the highest pitch of martial fury, the men leaped to their feet, and advanced with measured tread along the road, while young Henry Havelock, the General's son and aide-de-camp, who had ridden up in front of the leading regiment, moving slowly and deliberately at their head, steered his horse straight for the muzzle of the gun The ground in their rear was strewed with dead and wounded men, for the enemy, still resolutely standing their ground, fired round after round of grape with astonishing precision, but at length, appalled by the deafening cheers and the final onset of the British, they rushed in headlong flight from the battle-field of Cawnpore. The Nana spurred through the streets of the town, and urged on his panting horse towards Bithoor, and thousands of citizens, terrified by the news that the infuriated British were coming, poured forth into the surrounding country, and hid themselves in the villages.*

On the morrow of this, his fourth and greatest victory, Havelock congratulated his troops in these stirring words, "Soldiers, your General is satisfied, and more than satisfied with you He has never seen steadier or more devoted troops; but your labours are only beginning. Between the 7th and the 16th you have, under the Indian sun of July, marched a hundred and twenty-six miles, and fought four actions. But your comrades at Lucknow are in peril, Agra is besieged, Delhi is still the focus of mutiny and rebellion You must make great sacrifices if you would obtain great results Three cities have to be saved, two strong places to be de-blockaded. Your General is confident that he can effect all these things,

* Marshman, pp 302–11, *Saturday Review*, Sept 19, 1857, p 261; Trevelyan, pp 341–2, 355, Shepherd, pp. 122–3, 129. Havelock's loss in this action was 6 killed, 86 wounded, and 10 missing *Parl. Papers* vol xliv. (1857–58), Part 1, p. 124.

6 Guns
2 Guns
Flank March
to Allahabad

and restore this part of India to tranquillity, if you will only second him with your efforts, and if your discipline is equal to your valour."*

Havelock at Cawnpore.

On the morning of the 17th, as the troops were about to make their victorious entry into Cawnpore, they were told that the women and children whom they had come to save, the last remnant of the ill-fated garrison, had been destroyed. When they reached the city, some of them hurried on to the Beebeegurh, and entered the room in which the victims had been confined. Clotted blood lay ankle-deep upon the floor shreds of clothing and women's long tresses were scattered about the walls were dented with bullet-marks, the pillars were scored with deep sword-cuts Maddened by the sight, the soldiers hurried out into the courtyard, and there saw human limbs bristling from a well. As they stood and looked, these Ironsides, who had endured in stern silence the weariness of the march from Allahabad, and in four combats had dashed to pieces the army of the Nana, lifted up their voices and wept aloud. But their emotions soon changed They had come too late to save, but not too late to avenge.

On the evening of this day, the General and his men, no longer sustained by the excitement and the hope of the last few days, haunted by the recollection of the horrors which they had just witnessed, and now, in the moment of inaction, unable to forget the loss of their fallen comrades, were oppressed by a deep gloom. No sound was heard in the encampment save the melancholy notes of the Highland pipes which accompanied the interment of the dead. The General, as he sat at dinner with his son, musing upon the difficulties which lay before him, and silently anticipating the possible failure of his personal ambitions and the doom which might be in store for his soldiers, seemed to have lost all his old confidence. But his weakness was of short duration. The exultation of victory was gone but the path of duty was still open, and, though he might not be suffered to share in the triumph, the cause for which he fought was just, and must prevail. Turning to his son, he exclaimed, "If the worst comes to the worst, we can but die with our swords in our hands."†

In this spirit he resumed his operations. On the following

* Marshman, p 314. † *Ib.*, pp. 321-2.

day he removed the troops to a strong position at Newabgunj, where they would be able to defeat any attempt which the Nana might make for the recovery of the city; and bought up all the wine and spirits, lest they should be exposed to the temptation which had so nearly proved fatal to the garrison of Allahabad. But discipline was already threatened by another cause The soldiers, unrestrained and even encouraged by their officers,* were revelling in the plunder of the citizens. The wonder is, not that Havelock was obliged to threaten with the punishment of death the very men whose conduct in the field he had just enthusiastically praised, but that he was able to shield Cawnpore from the atrocities that had punished the citizens of Badajoz † Meanwhile his re-awakened energy had been rewarded and stimulated by an announcement which contrasted brightly with the dismal tidings which reached him from other parts of India. Disheartened by their last defeat, the Nana's troops had broken up, and the usurper himself, proclaiming to the Brahmins who surrounded him that he was about to drown himself in the waters of the Ganges, had fled by night into Oude ‡

July 18

On the 20th, Neill, who had spent some days in providing for the safety of Allahabad, arrived with a small force Anticipating his arrival, Havelock had already begun to take measures for placing Cawnpore in a state of defence, that he might be able to march as soon as possible to the relief of Lucknow. As he could not spare more than three hundred men to garrison the recovered city, it was necessary to establish them in a position so strong that they would be able to maintain it against any attack. With this view he had selected an elevated plateau close to the river-side, and was busily fortifying it when Neill joined him. As soon as the work was sufficiently advanced, he began to transport his own force to the Oude bank of the Ganges. This operation was one of extreme difficulty and danger. The river, here five times as wide as the Thames at London Bridge, and now greatly swollen by the rains, swept

* Extract from Neill's *Journal*, quoted by Kaye, vol. ii. p. 406, note

† Trevelyan (pp 355–6) seems to imply that the soldiers butchered innocent citizens I do not know whether this was the fact, but, judging from what was done in other parts of India, and remembering that the soldiers were in no mood to discriminate between the innocent and the guilty, I fully believe that it was.

‡ Kaye, vol. ii. p 390, Marshman, p 324.

the city with the swiftness of a torrent. Such was the or which Havelock's advance had inspired in the hearts of inhabitants, that skilled boatmen could only be collected h the greatest difficulty; and even with their aid each passe occupied eight hours Fortunately no enemy opposed the vement, and at last, by the strenuous exertions of Colonel tler, it was safely accomplished. On the 25th, Havelock, ter giving his final instructions to Neill, to whom he had trusted the defence of Cawnpore, crossed the river himself d joined the army * At that moment he may well have felt hat he and his gallant men were only beginning their labours For he was leaving a wide and rapid river in his rear. the Nana, he was informed, had again collected a large force to harass him rivers, canals, and fortified towns and villages lay in front of him, and a mutinous army and a host of armed rebels were determined to bar his progress. But the glory of four victories was upon him the appeal of the beleaguered garrison was present to his mind, and, undaunted by the obstacles which beset his path, he plunged fearlessly into the heart of Oude.

Battle of Onao

On the night of the 25th the troops bivouacked at a village called Mungulwar, about five miles from Cawnpore on the Lucknow road, and remained there for three days, while carriage and supplies were being collected At five o'clock on the morning of the 29th they began their advance in earnest, and, after a short march, came upon a large force of sepoys occupying a strong bastioned enclosure and a village separated by a narrow passage from the town of Onao Havelock saw at a glance that he would be unable to adopt his favourite method of turning the enemy's position, as it was protected by a swamp on one side, and flooded meadows on the other. It was necessary therefore at any cost to carry it by a front attack. The Highlanders and the Fusiliers drove the enemy out of the enclosure, but, as they pushed on, they encountered a destructive fire from the loop-holed houses of the village † So obstinate was the resistance of the rebels

* Marshman, pp. 326, 328, 330

† "These mud-walled villages of Oude are among the most peculiar features of the country Every hamlet is at chronic feud with its neighbours . . The consequence is that a century of practical experience in the art of self-defence has converted these villages into almost impregnable fortifications, and the villagers themselves into the best garrison troops in the world."—*Saturday Review*, 1857, p 391

within, that the General was obliged to send the 64th to support their comrades. Presently the village was set on fire. Still the rebels held out, and it was not till all their guns had been captured that they gave way At this moment, however, a fresh body was seen hurrying along the road from Lucknow to their support. Pushing forward rapidly, Havelock drew up his force on a dry spot just beyond the town, and awaited their approach. On they came, heedless of the trap which had been set for them, till, as they rushed confusedly up to the British line, the fire of Maude's guns and the Enfield rifles, which had hitherto been held in reserve, tore through their ranks, and, floundering helplessly in the morass as they strove too late to deploy into line, they were beset by the skirmishers on either side of the road, and finally discomfited *

Battle of Busseerutgunge

After a brief rest the victors resumed their march, but, before they had advanced many miles, they found their progress again disputed by the rebels, who had posted themselves in a walled town called Busseerutgunge Scanning their position, Havelock conceived a plan by which he hoped not merely to defeat, but also to annihilate them. While the Highlanders and Fusiliers, supported by the artillery, attacked the defences in front, the 64th were to steal round the town, and prevent the enemy from escaping through the gate on the further side. Fiercely assailed by the storming party, and bewildered by the movement on their flank, the enemy soon abandoned their guns and fled through the streets: but the 64th had allowed themselves to be delayed, and failed to cut off their retreat † Still the General had little cause to be dissatisfied. For the second time in his short campaign he had gained two victories in a single day.

July 30.

When, however, on the following morning, he deliberately reviewed his situation, other considerations, which the joy of victory had kept in the background, presented themselves to his vision. Cholera fatigue, exposure, and the fire of the enemy had made such sad inroads on his little army, that only eight hundred and fifty infantry soldiers remained fit for duty, the recent mutiny of the regiments at

* *Saturday Review*, 1857, p. 391; *Parl Papers*, vol xliv. (1857–58) Part 1, p 116, Marshman, pp 332–4.

† Marshman, pp 335–6. The British loss in the two battles was 88 killed and wounded, that of the enemy about 400. *Parl. Papers*, vol. xliv. (1857–58), Part 1, pp. 78, 118

Dinapore added to the dangers which encompassed him, the Nana's levies were hanging on his rear, ammunition was fast failing, and there was not a single litter to spare for the conveyance of the hundreds who must still fall before the Residency could be approached * Convinced, therefore, that for the present it would be madness to persist in his enterprise, he sadly gave the order to retreat There were some of the officers who murmured against the order They argued that the prestige of victory multiplied the fighting power of the column, that the men were just then in great heart, that the flying sepoys would have spread the news that British prowess was irresistible, and that, if the General had but pushed on rapidly, he might have reached the outskirts of Lucknow almost unopposed, and then, in conjunction with the Residency garrison, have so placed his guns as to shell the whole city The motto of Danton, "To dare, and to dare, and to dare again," was on their lips † But Havelock knew that there were circumstances under which to dare was to be foolhardy It is true indeed that before he left Cawnpore, he might have foreseen, perhaps did foresee most of the issues that now induced him to return, but, although to admit this is to admit that he committed an error in leaving Cawnpore when he did, the error was a glorious one For a man of his daring and generous nature it would have been impossible to refrain from at least attempting the relief of his imprisoned countrymen, so long as there was the faintest hope of success.

Havelock charged to retreat

There was another critic, however, outside his camp, in whose judgment he had erred on the side not of rashness, but of timidity On the last day of July he returned to Mungulwar, and from thence wrote to inform Neill that he could do nothing for the relief of Lucknow until he received a reinforcement of a thousand men and another battery of guns Neill read the letter with the deepest indignation That a British General should for an instant, for any consideration, pause in so holy an enterprise as the relief of the besieged garrison and the condign punishment of the besiegers, was in his eyes an abomination If every man in Havelock's army had been a Neill,

His correspondence with Neill

* Marshman, pp 337–8

† *Saturday Review*, 1857, p 392 On p 393 the writer states that it was rumoured in the camp that Havelock retreated in obedience to a direct order from the Governor-General

Lucknow might have been even now relieved, but, such as it was, an army of heroes, as its commander described it, it could not have accomplished the task which it had undertaken. Like other men of strong character, Neill forgot that all men were not as strong as himself He told Havelock plainly that the natives disbelieved the reports of his victories, that his retreat had destroyed the prestige of England, and that, while he was waiting for reinforcements, Lucknow would be lost, and concluded his letter with perhaps the most astounding words ever addressed by a subordinate officer to his commander "You ought to advance again, and not halt until you have rescued, if possible, the garrison of Lucknow Return here sharp, for there is much to be done between this and Agra, and Delhi" But he had mistaken the character of the man with whom he had to deal. "Your letter," wrote Havelock, "is the most extraordinary which I have ever perused. . . . Understand . . that a consideration of the obstruction which would arise to the public service at this moment alone prevents me from placing you under immediate arrest You now stand warned Attempt no further dictation"

Second battle of Busseerutgunge

Nevertheless Neill had spoken truly when he said that Havelock would have to wait long for the reinforcements which he required He himself passed on all that could be spared, namely a half-battery of guns and a company of the 84th but Havelock heard from Calcutta that he must expect no more for two months, as the 90th and the 5th Fusiliers, which he had begged Sir Patrick Grant to send him, were needed to deal with the mutineers in Behar Feeling then that he must relieve the besieged garrison now or never, he once more set his face towards Lucknow On the 5th of August he reached Busseerutgunge, and fought a battle which was almost the exact counterpart of the one that he had fought a few days before on the same spot On this occasion the turning column executed its movement without delay but the enemy, cowed by the fire of the British guns, fled so precipitately through the town that there was no time to cut off their retreat, and want of cavalry prevented Havelock from following up his victory * While his troops were halting for food

Aug 4

* *Lives of Indian Officers*, vol ii pp 385-7, Marshman, pp 341, 344 The British loss in this action was 2 killed and 28 wounded, that of the enemy about 300 killed and wounded *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857-58), Part 1, p 135

and rest, he began once more to meditate on the difficulties of his position He could not but feel that the reasons which had before compelled him to retreat were not less cogent now He could see his men round him digging graves for their comrades who had perished from cholera. The Gwalior Contingent had mutinied, and was reported to be within fifty miles of Cawnpore The zemindars, encouraged by his former retreat, were arming their retainers in every direction. He knew that, even if his little force succeeded in reaching Lucknow, it would not be able to fight its way through the streets, and its destruction might involve the fall of the Residency Yet, on the other hand, to desist from his enterprise might be to abandon the besieged garrison to the fate that had befallen the garrison of Cawnpore, to expose his own military reputation to the attacks of malignant critics, perhaps even to incur the reproaches of his friends Tortured by these conflicting anxieties, he tried to consider simply what his duty to the State required him to do, and then, seeing his way clearly before him, he resolved, with the full concurrence of the three most trusted members of his staff, the only officers whom he was accustomed to consult, to retire again in the direction of Cawnpore He spoke of this as the most painful resolution that he had ever formed History will speak of it as the most noble *

Havelock again obliged to retreat

Unable to understand why they should retreat before an enemy whom they had invariably defeated, the troops fell back, in bitter discontent, on Mungulwar While there, Havelock occupied his time in securing the means of communication with Cawnpore by constructing a floating platform, which, towed by a steamer, would at any time be available for the conveyance of troops across the river. Cawnpore itself had hitherto remained safe in the strong hands of Neill Directly after assuming command, he had taken decisive steps to stop the plundering which had hitherto prevailed, and, by a series of organised raids, had kept at bay the various insurgent bodies who threatened him Now, however, his position was becoming seriously imperilled On the 11th he wrote urgently to Havelock, informing him that four thousand rebels had collected at Bithoor, and would swoop down upon Cawnpore unless he came at once to the rescue

Neill appeals to him for help

* Marshman, pp 344-7, 349, *Saturday Review*, 1857, p 393

Though unwilling to quit Mungulwar, where his presence acted as a drag upon the besiegers of Lucknow, Havelock saw the danger to which his lieutenant was exposed, and hastened to comply with his request Lest, however, the Oude rebels, who had again rallied, should imagine that they had frightened him away, he resolved, as a preliminary step, to inflict upon them a parting defeat, and, making a rapid march, found them occupying an entrenched village about a mile and a half in front of Busseerutgunge He at first endeavoured to dislodge them by an artillery fire, but, screened by their earthworks, and serving their guns with effect, they were not so easily to be overcome, and it became necessary to call upon the infantry to charge Then the Highlanders, responding to the call, dashed forward with their accustomed gallantry, though they were reduced to little more than a hundred men, and, supported by a flank movement of the Fusiliers, bayoneted the gunners, and turned the captured guns upon the flying enemy After this exploit a retreat was once more sounded, and on the 13th the army re-entered Cawnpore *

Havelock advances again, and fights another battle

Aug 12

Officers and men alike now sorely needed rest Two regiments had become greatly dispirited, and it was represented to Havelock that, at the present rate of mortality, the whole force would be annihilated in six weeks He replied that, till the rebels were driven from Bithoor, repose was out of the question Accordingly on the morning of the 16th the troops again left the city, and, after an eight hours' march under a blazing sun, found themselves face to face with their opponents † The rebel commander, who is believed to have been Tantia Topee himself, had drawn up his men in a plain thickly planted with sugar-cane and castor-oil In front of Havelock's right wing, and concealed by the plantations, was a fortified village, and beyond it an earth redoubt Beyond the redoubt, again, a deep rivulet, spanned by a bridge, ran round a hill on which stood the town of Bithoor The bridge was defended on the hither

Battle of Bithoor

* Marshman, pp 347, 352–5, *Parl Papers*, vol. xliv (1857–58), Part 1 pp 142–3.

† The *Saturday Review* critic censured Havelock for not having observed the custom of earlier Anglo-Indian commanders, who were in the habit of marching before sunrise

side by a breastwork and a battery mounting two guns Havelock made his dispositions The Highlanders, the Fusiliers, and the Royal Artillery deployed on the right, and advanced to the attack At a distance of about a thousand yards from the breastwork, the gunners stopped, and fired a few rounds Just as they were limbering up in order to go closer, a sharp fire was opened from the village Two companies of the Fusiliers were sent forward to storm it After a desperate struggle, in which one of the native regiments actually crossed bayonets with the Fusiliers, the rebels were driven successively from the village and the redoubt, but, as they still fought their two guns with resolution, and kept up a galling musketry fire from behind the shelter of their breastworks, they were again attacked with the bayonet, and finally driven across the bridge, and through the streets of Bithoor Meanwhile the left wing had been engaged with the enemy's right, and, having expelled them from the sugar-cane, had chased them into the town Once more, however, the rebel army made good its retreat, for the infantry were too exhausted to pursue, and the cavalry were too few in number to be risked *

Havelock superseded by Outram

With this victory Havelock's career as an independent commander came to a close, for, on his return to Cawnpore, he learned that he had been superseded in favour of Sir James Outram, superseded by order of a Government which, having itself failed to accomplish anything for the suppression of the revolt, required its officers to perform impossibilities Not a word of thanks was vouchsafed to him for his services No explanation was offered to soothe his wounded feelings Not even an official letter accompanied the copy of the Government Gazette in which he read the announcement of his supersession Yet, in the face of unparalleled difficulties, he had conducted a campaign which still remains unsurpassed in the history of British India, a campaign which had turned raw recruits into seasoned veterans, a campaign performed under a tropical sun and under tropical storms by an army which, scarcely larger than an ordinary regiment, sleeping on the hard ground, for weeks deprived even of the shelter of tents, fasting often for

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* Marshman, pp 357-60, *Saturday Review*, 1857, pp 393-4 The British loss was 49 killed and wounded, that of the enemy about 250 *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857-58) Part 1, p 201

entire days, had within six weeks traversed an immense tract of country and stilled a vast population, and, with numbers hourly diminished by the sword and by pestilence, nine times engaged and defeated the hosts of Oude and of Bithoor, and the disciplined battalions of the Bengal army Perhaps the consciousness of the injustice with which his Government had treated him may have inspired that immortal order in which he bade his soldiers await the verdict of their countrymen —

"If conquest can now be achieved under the most trying circumstances, what will be the triumph and retribution of the time when the armies from China, from the Cape, and from England shall sweep through the land? Soldiers, in that moment, your labours, your privations, your sufferings, and your valour will not be forgotten by a grateful country"*

Character of Outram.

There was one circumstance, however, which must have gone far to heal his wounded feelings He had been superseded indeed, but by the Bayard of India. It was Charles Napier who had bestowed this title upon Outram before the misunderstandings arising out of the Scinde controversy had clouded their early friendship Yet, felicitous as it was, it only described one side of Outram's character In his reverence for holy things, his courage, his courtesy, his honour, his manliness, he did indeed embody the old idea of the true and perfect knight but his sympathy was untouched by those influences which sapped the humanising force of mediæval chivalry He was ready to espouse the cause of all who needed championship, without heeding the distinctions of race, or creed, or class. He was as courteous to the wife of a private soldier as to the highest lady in the land He knew how to enter into the interests and encourage the aspirations of younger men, while always ready to join in their mirth He delighted in making children happy. As a commander, he was so genial in his manner towards his officers and men, so considerate in providing for their wants, above all, so hearty in his approbation of their valour, that he won not merely their confidence, but their enthusiastic devotion. But it was in his dealings with native governments and native peoples that the chivalry of his nature found the widest scope It is difficult for those who have been accustomed to gauge political honesty by European standards to

* Marshman, p 361

realise the stainless purity, the unreserved self-devotion of his political career. No doubt the simpler conditions of public life in India, the absence of motives for corrupting or truckling to the masses, may have had much to do with the superior probity of Anglo-Indian statesmen. But it is impossible to conceive of any consideration that could have tempted Outram to stoop to a dirty action. No dread of official censure, of professional stagnation, or of pecuniary loss ever deterred him from advocating a righteous cause, however unpopular, from exposing an injustice, however powerfully supported. Indeed, though there have been greater men in Anglo-Indian history, there has never been one more loveable.

He goes to join Havelock.

On the 6th of August he left Calcutta. But for the foresight of a civil officer, his passage up the river might have been seriously retarded. To the east of the Patna Division was a large tract of country officially designated the Bhaugulpore Division, and ruled by Commissioner Yule. After the mutiny at Dinapore, this officer foresaw that the native troops within his own Division would inevitably be infected. He therefore detained a hundred and fifty men of the 5th Fusiliers, who happened to be passing up the Ganges, and charged them with the duty of watching over the stations of Bhaugulpore and Monghyr. By this measure he rescued from imminent peril the great highway of the Ganges. Thus Outram was able to reach Dinapore unmolested.* A few days later Havelock wrote to warn the Commander-in-Chief that he might be obliged actually to fall back on Allahabad if he were not reinforced, so numerous were the enemies who threatened him, and so diminished the numbers of his own men. His wants, however, had been anticipated. Though the civil authorities had striven hard to detain a large portion of the reinforcements for the protection of the Bengal districts, the earnest representations of the Commander-in-Chief had shamed them out of their selfishness, and all the troops that could possibly be spared were already on their way up the river. Outram meanwhile steadily pursued his journey, making arrangements as he went for the protection of the stations through which he passed. On the 5th of September he was able to march out of Allahabad.

Aug 17

* Marshman, p 383, *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857-58), Part 2, pp 347-8.

Some days later, hearing that a number of zemindars had crossed the Ganges from Oude, and were threatening to cut off his communications, he detached a small force under Vincent Eyre, which drove them into the river, and thus nipped in the bud what had threatened to develop into a serious rising throughout the Doab. Proceeding on his way without serious opposition, he entered Cawnpore on the night of the 15th,* and on the next day issued a Division Order which has no parallel in military history —

Sept 10

Sept 11.

Sept 16

"The important duty of first relieving the garrison of Lucknow had been entrusted to Brigadier-General Havelock, C B , and Major-General Outram feels that it is due to this distinguished officer, and the strenuous and noble exertions which he has already made to effect that object, that to him should accrue the honour of that achievement Major-General Outram is confident that the great end for which General Havelock and his brave troops have so long and so gloriously fought, will now, under the blessing of Providence, be accomplished

He leaves to Havelock the glory of relieving Lucknow

"The Major-General, therefore, in gratitude for, and admiration of, the brilliant deeds in arms achieved by General Havelock and his gallant troops, will cheerfully waive his rank on the occasion, and will accompany the force to Lucknow in his civil capacity as Chief Commissioner of Oude, tendering his military services to General Havelock as a volunteer"

Deeply as these words stirred the hearts of men at the time, and often as they have since been quoted, the absolute unselfishness of the resolve which they expressed has only lately been brought to light It is now certain that Outram was not merely resigning the glory of relieving Lucknow, and sacrificing the General's share of the expected prize-money, but, believing that this campaign would be his last, was also giving up the chance of obtaining a baronetcy and its accompanying pension, thus foregoing the only hope of securing a provision for his declining years † But it is wrong to speak of the act as unique It was but the final triumph of a life of self-sacrifice

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* Marshman, p 396

† *Life of Outram*, vol ii pp 221–2.

The force that was now assembled for the relief of Lucknow consisted of three thousand one hundred and seventy-nine men of all arms, and included, besides the remnant of Havelock's original column and some additional companies belonging to the mutilated regiments of which it was composed,* two batteries of artillery, a few native irregular cavalry, and the 5th Fusiliers and 90th Light Infantry The whole was divided into three brigades, one of which was placed under the command of Neill Thanks to the diligence with which Havelock had employed the period of his enforced inaction, little remained to be done in order to complete the preparations for an advance, and on the 19th and 20th the army crossed the Ganges almost without opposition †

Composition of Havelock's augmented army

Next morning the march was begun Approaching the familiar walls of Mungulwar, Havelock saw that he was to be resisted Vigorously attacking the position in front, and sending a detachment to turn it on the right, he so disconcerted its defenders that they presently gave way, and the cavalry, led by Outram in person, galloped in pursuit, captured two guns, and sabred a hundred and twenty of the fugitives. Pausing for a moment's rest at Onao, the British pushed on to Busseerutgunge, bivouacked there, and, resuming their march under a heavy downpour of rain, crossed the Sye, the bridge over which had been left intact by the flying enemy, and halted for the night in and about the village of Bunnee At six o'clock in the morning the distant thunder of the artillery at Lucknow, which had been heard all through the night, died away, and it became evident that preparations were being made to oppose them but the city was now only a day's march distant, and, without a thought of failure, they marched on till they came in sight of the Alumbagh About this strong position the enemy were descried, massed in great numbers Havelock sent on a party of cavalry to reconnoitre Presently they returned, and reported that the enemy's left rested on the Alumbagh itself, while their centre and right were drawn up

Sept 21

Final advance towards Lucknow

Battle of Mungulwar

Sept 22

Sept 23

Battle of the Alumbagh

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* *Parl Papers*, vol xliv (1857–58), Part 1, pp 213, 223.
† Marshman, pp 395, 39?

behind a chain of hillocks The country on both sides of the road, up to within a short distance of their position, was covered with water Havelock resolved to turn their right flank His troops, as they came within range, were exposed to a withering fire but Eyre, Maude, and Olpherts, bringing up their batteries, hurled back the enemy's cavalry and artillery, the 2nd brigade, having at length gained dry ground, struck off the road to the left, and attacked their infantry in front, Neill, with the 1st brigade, enveloped and overpowered their right, and the 5th Fusiliers stormed and captured the Alumbagh itself Then Outram dashed forward at the head of the cavalry, captured five guns, and drove the fugitives before him to the canal Before long, however, fresh guns were brought down from the city, and, as the pursuers were now assailed in their turn, it became necessary to fall back for the night on the Alumbagh The ground was ankle-deep in mud, and the men had no covering but their great coats, but they lay down to rest with light hearts, for Outram had just told them how their comrades had assaulted and captured Delhi *

Sept. 24. Havelock's plans for effecting a junction with the garrison

Next day some annoyance was felt from a distant cannonade but no serious attempt was made to reply to it, and, while the troops recruited their energies, the Generals consulted as to what plan of attack they should pursue on the morrow Havelock had all along intended to seize the Dilkoosha, cross the Goomtee, and, gaining the Fyzabad road at the Kokrail bridge, occupy a building called the Badshah Bagh, recross the Goomtee at the iron bridge, and thence advance to the Residency By the adoption of this route the relieving force would have been saved from the perils of street-fighting The rains, however, had rendered the country impassable for artillery, and no alternative remained but to cross the canal at the Charbagh bridge, and pursue the road along its left bank to the Residency †

Feelings of the garrison.

Meanwhile a great change had come over the feelings of the besieged garrison For some days after the last departure of Ungud there had been nothing to vary the monotony of their life. The death-roll

* Marshman, pp 403-5, *Lives of Indian Officers*, vol ii pp 400-1
† *Ib*, pp 406-9

grew longer. More natives deserted.* But at eleven o'clock on the night of the 22nd a man came into the entrenchment, breathless with excitement, having just been fired upon by the enemy's sentries It was Ungud He announced that Outram and Havelock had crossed the Ganges, and might be expected within a few days The news spread like wildfire Next day firing was distinctly heard close to the city The spirits of all rose to the highest point, and the native portion of the garrison were now at last convinced that relief was really at hand But on the 24th the sounds of firing became less frequent, and some began again to despond †

Sept 23

The day of trial dawned at last. Havelock rose early, and spent some time in prayer At eight o'clock the troops were drawn up, ready to advance ‡ Their look revealed what they had done and suffered; but the expression on their war-worn faces was that of men going forth to certain victory § Many indeed must die before the victory could be won, and it was hard to die on such a day as this, but, mindful of Havelock's words, all were ready to make great sacrifices that those who survived might obtain great results The baggage was left under a guard at the Alumbagh the Generals and their staff examined together on the map the route which lay before them, and between eight and nine the order was given to advance ||

Morning of the 25th of September

Harassed by musketry, and raked on its flank and in front by an artillery fire, the column pushed steadily on towards the canal. The bridge was commanded by innumerable sharp-shooters perched in the rooms of the adjoining houses, and defended by six guns posted on the Lucknow side. While Outram diverged to the right with the object of bringing a flanking fire to bear on the enemy from the bank of the canal, Maude endeavoured to silence their guns. but his men fell so fast that he had to call again and again for volunteers from the infantry, and, the resistance being obstinately maintained, Neill at last ordered the Madras Fusiliers to charge Some twenty-five of them,

Advance of the column.

* Wilson, p 168, Gubbins, p 294.
† *Ib*, pp 297-8
‡ Marshman, p 411
§ Major North's *Journal of an Officer in India*, p 185
|| Marshman, p 412

they had striven so long to reach, and fearing lest the rebels might at the last moment succeed by a desperate effort in overpowering the garrison, prevailed upon him to push on The Highlanders were called to the front the Sikhs followed, and the Madras Fusiliers brought up the rear The road was spanned by an archway, and here, while directing the movements of his men, in the moment of the victory which he had done so much to secure, General Neill fell from his horse, shot through the head But there was no time to think of the fallen Like a life-boat ploughing its way through a tempestuous sea to the rescue of some sinking ship, the column rushed on, now plunging through deep trenches which had been cut across the road to bar their progress, now staggering, as they rose, beneath the storm of bullets which hailed down upon them from the loop-holes of the houses, and the missiles which were flung from the roofs But they were now within a few yards of the goal, they could see the tattered flag of England, waving on the roof of the Residency, and, though men fell fast at every step, the survivors never paused till Outram and Havelock led them through the gate into the entrenchment *

The welcome

Then the exultation, the sympathy, the loyalty of their hearts found expression in a burst of deafening cheers, the garrison caught up the cry, and from every pit, and trench, and battery, from behind the roofless and shattered houses the notes of triumph and welcome echoed and re-echoed Women crowded up to shake hands with the men who had fought twelve battles to save them, and the Highlanders, with tears streaming down their cheeks, caught up in their arms the wondering children, and passed them from one to another Anxious questions were tenderly answered kinsmen long separated met once more old comrades fought their battles over again, and the garrison, as they told their own tale, and learned with pride the admiration which their struggle had aroused, heard in their turn, with reverent sympathy, how and at what a cost they had been relieved †

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* Marshman, pp 414-17, *Lives of Indian Officers*, vol ii. pp 407-9, *Life of Sir James Outram*, vol ii pp 232-8

† Marshman, pp 417-8, Rees, p 223, *A Lady's Diary of the Siege of Lucknow*, p 120 Many other authorities have been consulted for the story of Havelock's campaign besides those to which I have referred.

springing forward before the regiment was formed up, were dashed to pieces in an instant but young Havelock, who had ridden on with them, and a single private wondrously escaped. Bullets whizzed round their heads, and still the regiment was not ready. Again and again the private loaded and fired, while Havelock, sitting still in his saddle, kept waving his sword, and calling upon the rest to advance, and now at last, dashing over the bridge before the enemy could reload, they captured the guns, bayoneted the gunners, and entered Lucknow *

Excitement of the garrison

The city was now awfully disquieted From a high point within the entrenchment hundreds of the citizens and even many of the sepoys were seen flying from the approaching doom, some rushing over the iron bridge, others plunging into the river but the besiegers who remained redoubled the fury of their attack, and the women of the garrison, as they moved nervously about their rooms, unable to control their excitement, and striving to catch a glimpse of the movements of their friends, could hear the crash of shot and shell from the surrounding batteries above the distant roar of the contending armies †

Street fighting

The Highlanders, after crossing the canal, moved forward alone upon the Cawnpore road, to occupy the attention of the enemy, and there for three hours repulsed every assault Meanwhile the rest of the army safely crossed the bridge, and, taking the road to the right, encountered little opposition till they came within three quarters of a mile of the Residency, when they were met with a terrific fire from the Kaiser Bagh, but, replying as best they could, pushed unfalteringly on, and, passing a narrow bridge over a nullah,‡ overlooked by houses filled with musketeers, found shelter at last beneath the walls of the Fureed Buksh and the Chutter Munzil Presently the Highlanders, who had advanced alone by a shorter road, joined them Here Outram was anxious to halt for the night, to allow the rear-guard to close up, but Havelock, sharing in the ardour of his troops, who could not bear to stand still almost in sight of those whom

* Marshman, pp 412–14, Malleson (vol i pp 536–7) gives a detailed and very interesting account of the capture of the bridge.

† Rees, p 221, Gubbins, p 299

‡ A small stream or ditch There is nothing exactly like a nullah in England.

CHAPTER X.

THE PUNJAUB AND DELHI.

1857
State of the Punjaub

HOWEVER much opinions may differ as to the degree in which Dalhousie was responsible for the Indian Mutiny, it will not be denied that, by his Punjaub policy, he prepared an effective antidote The extraordinary part which that province played in the events of 1857 is explained by the special character of its antecedent history Its conquest had been so recent that the inhabitants had not had time to forget the evils from which that conquest had set them free, or to unlearn their awe and admiration of the people by whose might it had been effected They could not but acknowledge the justice of British rule, and the material prosperity which it had conferred upon them. A succession of abundant harvests had put them into good humour The deprivation of their arms had exercised a softening influence upon their habits Suspected chiefs had been removed out of harm's way, and those who remained, remembering the tyranny of the Khalsa army, had no desire for the success of a revolt which threatened to place them at the mercy of an insolent soldiery Even if there had been a general spirit of disaffection, it would have been weakened by the national antipathy between Sikh and Hindostanee, by the religious antipathy between Sikh and Mahometan On the other hand, although the crusading spirit of the Khalsa slumbered, it was by no means dead However peacefully disposed the population of the plains might be, there was danger to be apprehended from the turbulent hill-tribes on the border. Dost Mahomed might be tempted by the knowledge

of the straits to which his former enemies were reduced, to violate the treaty which he had lately concluded with them More than ten thousand European soldiers, indeed, were quartered in the province, but the bulk of them were massed in the Peshawur valley and on the Simla hills, leaving a comparatively weak force to garrison the immense tract of country between the Sutlej and the Indus Of the native troops, indeed, the Punjaubee Irregulars, numbering some thirteen thousand men, were known to be efficient, and believed to be trustworthy but, as a set-off, there were thirty-six thousand Poorbeahs, every one of whom might be a traitor *

The Punjaub officers

In trying, however, to calculate the strength of the opposing forces which affected the political equilibrium of the Punjaub in 1857, we should fall into a grievous error if we forgot to consider the competence of the British officers to whom the administration of the province had been entrusted Dalhousie, in his partiality for the Punjaub, had selected the best men whom he could find, to preside over its destinies, and the wonderful rapidity with which it had advanced towards civilisation bore witness to his discernment It would be hard to name any country in which a proportionately greater number of able military and political officers have ever been gathered together But even more admirable than their ability were the harmony and the mutual sympathy with which they worked They had firm faith in the soundness of the system that had raised their province to such unexampled prosperity, they were full of confidence in themselves, and full of admiration for each other Above all, they were fortunate in possessing a chief to whom they were able to look up with confidence and respect

John Lawrence

The Chief Commissioner of the Punjaub was Sir John Lawrence He was thoroughly familiar with the country, and the people with whom he had to deal He was a cautious, yet bold politician, a resolute, sagacious man The power of originating was wanting to his mind, but he knew how to use, and sometimes to improve the conceptions of others His broad, powerful frame and massive features betokened an inexhaustible capacity for work His character had plenty of faults, but in no act of his life was he ever weak Nor, though he had much kindness of heart, was

* *Punjaub Mutiny Report*, pp 2, 16-8, pars 8, 46, 48

be tolerant of anything like weakness in others He was outwardly often rough, harsh, and overbearing Though, when not actually at work, he could be a cheerful, even jovial companion, he unquestionably lacked that charm, a charm based upon something deeper than mere felicity of manner, which endeared his brother Henry to all with whom he came in contact, and, though he was a religious man, he as certainly left upon men's minds the impression of a character less free from worldliness and self-seeking But, when the worst has been said of John Lawrence, it still remains true that he was not merely an able man, but a good man His heart was wholly in his work, he laboured as strenuously as his brother, if with less of charity and sympathy, for the well-being of the natives, and, if he did not spare others, he never spared himself Those who have had opportunities of observing the sterling manliness of his character, those who remember the unostentatious devotion with which, after his final return from India, he gave himself up to every good work which he could in any way forward, will never speak of him without emotion

News of the seizure of Delhi reaches Lahore May 11 & 12.

When the telegrams announcing the mutiny at Meerut and the seizure of Delhi reached Lahore, the capital of the Punjaub, John Lawrence was on his way to the Murree Hills, whither he had been advised to go for the benefit of his health, but he had left behind him a man who was well fitted to deal with any emergency that might arise, his countryman and former schoolfellow, Robert Montgomery, the Judicial Commissioner A man of singularly smooth manner and genial and benevolent aspect, Montgomery was yet to the full as resolute as his chief, and more capable of instantly initiating a daring policy in such a crisis as had now arisen The full significance of the telegrams was at once apparent to him. India would be lost if the Punjaub were not at once made secure, and the security of the Punjaub depended in the first instance on the security of the great cities and magazines scattered over it Lahore itself was naturally his first care Its population amounted to nearly a hundred thousand souls, many of whom were restless Sikhs and Mahometans, certain to take advantage of the slightest symptom of weakness on the part of their rulers The city itself was garrisoned by a small body of European and native soldiers but the bulk of the

troops, consisting of one native cavalry and three native infantry regiments, the 81st Queen's, and two troops of European horse artillery, were stationed at the neighbouring cantonment of Meean-meer Montgomery learned, on the best native authority, that the four native regiments were only waiting for a favourable opportunity to revolt

May 12

He therefore assembled the chief civil and military officers, and asked their opinions as to what ought to be done He himself and Colonel Macpherson, the Military Secretary, urged that the sepoys should be deprived of their ammunition Captain Richard Lawrence, the chief of the police, thought it better to disarm them altogether After some further discussion, Montgomery resolved to drive over to Meean-meer, and take counsel with Stuart Corbett, the Brigadier This officer fully agreed with Montgomery on the necessity for taking the initiative, and declared himself ready to deprive the sepoys of their ammunition, though he was not prepared to offend the prejudices of his officers by actually disarming them Later in the day, however, he came to the conclusion that the more decisive measure would be the wiser, and, writing to inform Macpherson of his change of purpose, ordered a general parade for the following morning

It happened that that night there was to have been a ball at Meean-meer It might have been thought that, in the midst of such a crisis as that which now hung over the empire, the dancers would postpone their amusement But it was wisely decided that such a step would needlessly excite suspicion, and the guests came as though nothing had occurred to disturb their security Hardly one of those present knew the object of the parade which was to take place on the morrow but the few who were in the secret must have thought of that famous ball at Brussels, from which Wellington started for the field of Quatre Bras

The ball at Meean meer

Early in the morning the troops were drawn up on the parade-ground The Europeans were on the right, the native infantry in the centre, and the native cavalry on the left. The natives outnumbered the Europeans by eight to one First of all, the order of Government for the disbandment of the 34th at Barrackpore was read to each regiment. Then the native regiments were ordered to change front to the rear.

May 13 The disarming parade